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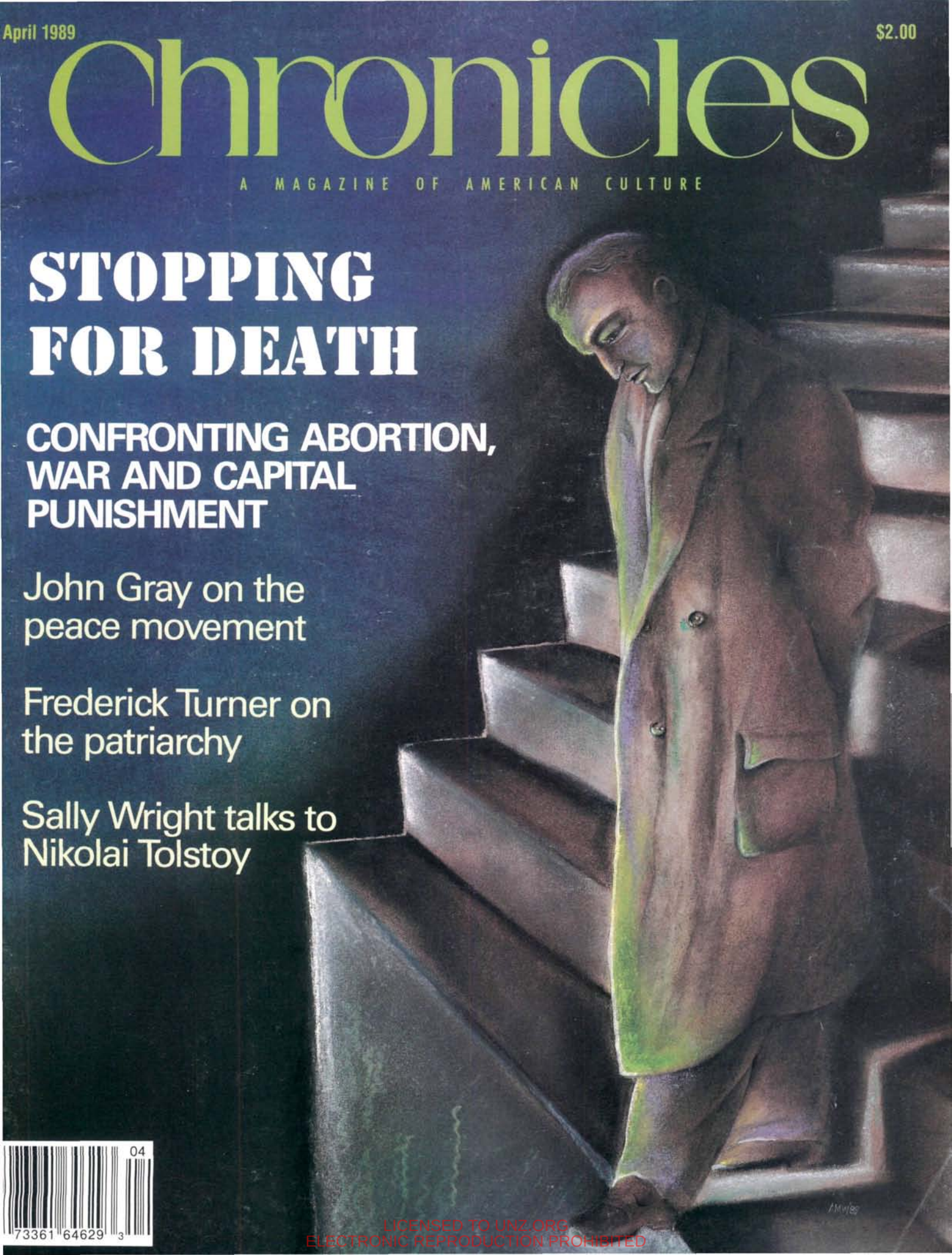

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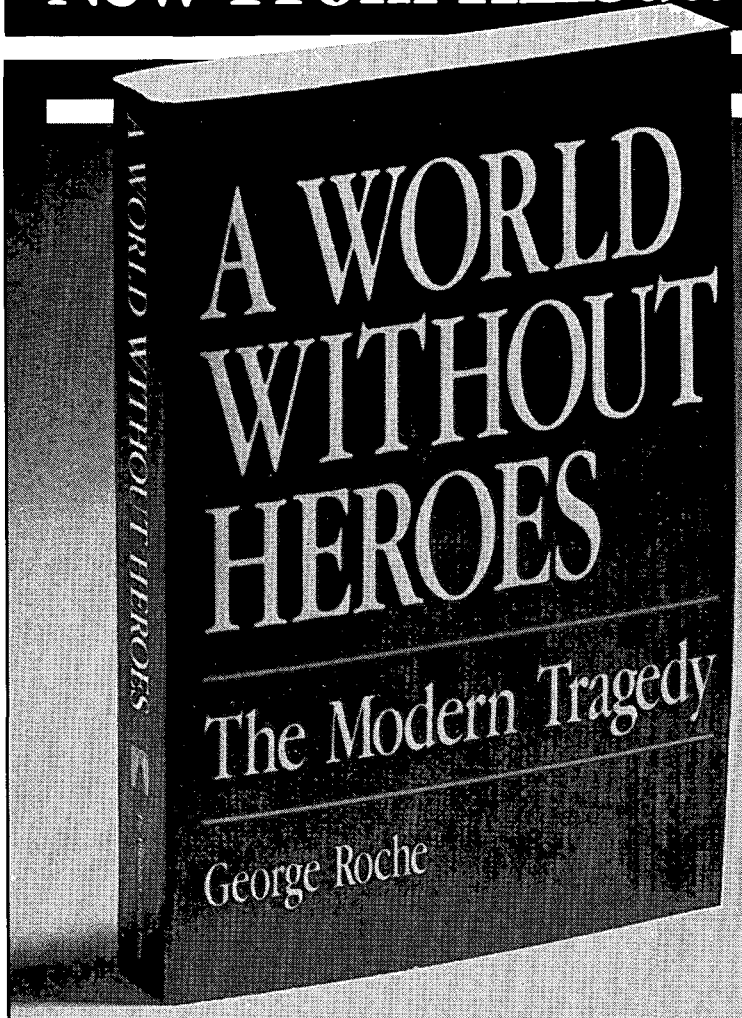

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By George Roche

Foreword By Russell Kirk

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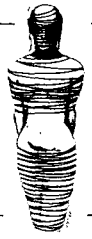

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE
Vol. 13, No. 4 April 1989

On 'Publishers and Sinners'

Although I admire the "All Booked Up" issue of *Chronicles* (January 1989), I must protest E. Christian Kopff's untrue assertion that "Maxwell Perkins of Scribner's did not just rewrite and butcher Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe. . . ."

Whatever Perkins did or did not do to Wolfe's work, he neither rewrote nor butchered Fitzgerald's prose. There is no evidence of Perkins's rewriting on any page of Fitzgerald's surviving manuscripts.

Prof. Kopff should have known—or should have learned—that the textual scholarship on Stephen Crane was done by Fredson Bowers, and that Prof. Bowers's editions of *Maggie* and *Red Badge* were published in the University Press of Virginia Edition of Crane well before the edited *Red Badge* appeared in the *Norton Anthology*.

—*Matthew J. Bruccoli*
Jefferies Professor of English
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC

Dr. Kopff Replies:

By the words "rewrite and butcher" I meant to suggest that (1) Perkins had a significant influence on the novels of Fitzgerald and Wolfe and (2) that influence was not necessarily beneficent. (1) is controversial, (2) is not. Professor Bruccoli tries to deny (1) by telling us that Perkins did not write on Fitzgerald's manuscripts, while forgetting to tell us that he did write on Fitzgerald's proof. (*The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, New York, 1963, p. 151. When *Letters*, pp. 149-52 are compared with *Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins*—New York, 1950, p. 51—we have a clear case of Perkins' rewriting Fitzgerald's *The Beautiful and the Damned*.) Perkins' preferred method of changing his authors' texts was long editorial meetings with them. Perkins himself describes one such session with Wolfe in *The Carolina Magazine* for October 1938. (See A. Scott Berg, *Max Perkins*—New York, 1978, pp. 7-8.) It ended with Wolfe effectively calling the editor a rattlesnake, but conceding the omissions Perkins wanted. Perkins introduced Fitzgerald to the ideas of changing the point of view of the first draft of *This Side of Paradise* from first person to third person and restructuring the presentation of *Gatsby*. Other suggestions, such as omitting the mutilation of Myrtle Wilson in *Gatsby*, were rejected. These and many other examples of Perkins' influence on Fitzgerald and Wolfe have long been known from the Scribner archives at Princeton and Berg's book. Perkins regretted that he could not talk directly to Fitzgerald about *Gatsby*. I believe that it was precisely to avoid such a situation that Fitzgerald went to Europe to write it.

I said that "Crane's version" of *Red Badge of Courage*, i.e., a reconstruction of Crane's manuscript text before it went through the editorial process at Appleton, was first published in the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*. Prof. Bruccoli says, "The textual work on Stephen Crane was done by Fredson Bowers." Much, though not all, important work for the text of Crane was made available to scholars through Bowers' critical edition, as well as his facsimile edition of Crane's manuscript, which was dedicated to Prof. Bruccoli. But Bowers did not publish "Crane's version" of *Red Badge* or anything like it. He showed his loyalty to the Appleton text by printing Crane's original chapter 12 separately from the main text. He also emended (or, as Douglas Young used to put it, "immended") the dialogue to remove traces of dialect from Henry Fleming's speeches and introduces dialect into the dialogue of other characters. The omissions alone have been estimated to affect 5,000 words of a short book. All this is well known and can be easily confirmed by anybody with access to a research library.

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On 'Books and Book Reviewing'

Katherine Dalton's article in the January 1989 *Chronicles* overstates both the leftward bias of American book reviewing and the authority of *The New York Times*.

She rests much of her case on the handling of *Veil* in *The New York Times Book Review* and *The New York Review of Books*. No other books get any extended treatment. But even in her chosen case, the truth is more complex than what she presents. In addition to its review by Thomas Powers, *The New York Review of Books* ran an extremely damning column on the book by Murray Kempton. "No legwork here," she says of David C. Martin's review. There was equally little legwork in her review of the reviewing.

And as for the authority of *The New York Times*, it may count for sales, but it was not sufficient to prevent the judges of the National Book Award from giving their fiction prize, two years in a row, to novelists who were not only not from the East (one was from Chicago, the other from Sacramento) but had not even been reviewed in *The New York Times Book Review*.

—Jack Miles, Book Editor
Los Angeles Times
Los Angeles, CA

Miss Dalton Replies:

I did indeed read Murray Kempton's column in *The New York Review of Books*, hoping that he would raise the question about Bob Woodward's *Veil* that seemed so obvious to me. He didn't. Kempton's argument is that Casey's great CIA victory was his conquest of this reporter from *The Washington Post*. Kempton is critical of Woodward, yes, but his criticism stems from his giving full credit to Woodward's story. My point was quite different, and much simpler: merely that there was some question as to Woodward's having met with Casey, and why hasn't anyone really looked into it?

That point still stands. Mr. Miles is perhaps right, however, to say that I should have at least mentioned the Kempton column, if only to show that Thomas Powers' mostly favorable review of *Veil* was not the only coverage *The New York Review* gave Woodward's book.

As for the National Book Awards, my point was not that *The New York Times* controls every single last bit of literary opinion, and that its "authority" could "prevent" the National Book Award judges from awarding the prize to books the *Times* had not (yet) reviewed. My point was that—whatever the effects of *The New York Review* or the *Chicago Tribune* or the *L.A. Times*—*The New York Times* is far and away the most powerful opinion-maker. By stating that the NYT "may count for sales" (not to mention cachet), I think Mr. Miles is ceding my point.

On 'All Booked Up'

I very much enjoyed Jane Greer's article in your January 1989 issue, and "The World of the Small Press" by Thomas McGonigle was very informative. But I was irritated by his complaints about the avalanche of submissions and lack of subscriptions. Why don't more people subscribe to small press magazines? Perhaps because of publishers like McGonigle. In his own words, "Over the years *Adrift* was listed in the various guides to the small press world. . . . I did three issues of *Adrift* before I asked myself why. . . . I am still collecting material for the next issue." If I subscribed to a magazine and it was published three times in a period of years, I certainly would not renew my subscription or recommend it to others!

Two years ago I sent for a sample copy of a Canadian small press magazine. After reading the back issue, I subscribed. The next correspondence I received from the editors was a notice that they had "temporarily suspended publication." The only other piece of literature I ever got from them was my cancelled check.

The editors of another fledgling small press magazine asked me to submit a short story, based on an article of mine they had seen in a newsletter.

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Naturally, I subscribed to their publication to help support the new endeavor. After months of editing and revision by mail, they accepted the short story for issue number two to be published in April of 1988. I am still waiting for issue number two.

But, however disillusioning, the small press is still better than the alternatives: trying futilely to get the attention of a major publisher, or never being published at all.

—Jeffrey L. Waters
Des Plaines, IL

On Peter Berger's Response to 'Letter From BU'

Peter L. Berger's response (November 1988) to my "Letter From BU" (September 1988) encourages further discussion about the problems of higher education in general and BU in particular. I wrote the piece not just because it is an interesting testimony, but because it illustrates the need for greater accountability in academia. Members of the academic profession, irrespective of their philosophical dispositions, are not above legitimate criticism about their performance in delivering an increasingly expensive service.

The fact that most Ph.D. students, myself included, receive fellowship aid should not stifle this kind of discussion. It is neither "monumental ingratitude" nor "distasteful" (as Berger states) to discuss problems concerning those responsible for administering the education that is the basis for those fellowships. Students should demand high standards regardless of who pays the bill. On the other hand, professors may not be as enthusiastic for high standards because it will entail more work.

The problem is that universities are relatively unaffected by the discipline and accountability imposed by market forces. Not only are most academics biased and out of touch with reality, but large universities, BU included, have increasingly come to resemble inefficient bureaucratic socialist enclaves.

Berger's assertion that "American academia is indeed dominated by liberalism [and that] no administration, whatever its ideological coloration, can alter this within the canons of academic freedom" is defeatist. John Silber's administration of BU could be facilitated by more active support from faculty members committed to sound curriculum and high standards. More could be done within the canons of academic freedom at BU to alleviate liberal mediocrity if concerned faculty members, like Berger, became more engaged in their own university instead of being preoccupied with their own world.

There is certainly some truth to Adam Smith's observation that "the discipline of colleges and universities is in general contrived, not for the benefit of students, but for the interest, or more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters." But the fact is that America can no longer afford this ease of the masters. Berger is well aware that liberal arts education is largely failing in its basic purpose: to train students' critical faculties for responsible citizenship and leadership. If the future historian looks back to explain the decline of America, he or she will undoubtedly find the universities bearing a large portion of the blame.

Professor Berger states that it is ludicrous for me to suggest that I was given a hard time for my libertarian views at BU. Yet he was present at my dissertation defense in April 1987 when the economist on the committee insisted that I delete favorable references to the success of supply-side economics. Six weeks later, this same economist told Berger's conference on the debate between capitalism and socialism that he was impressed with comparative statistics on East and West Germany, North and South Korea, and Cuba and Caribbean counterparts, that demonstrated relative equality in the economic output of communist and noncommunist countries. This is the economist that Berger refers to as "a very distinguished member of the BU faculty." It was more than his bumper stickers that I disapproved of.

—S. Steven Powell
Stanford, CA

On 'Darwin for Sissies'

No question about it: those touchy-feely, pantheistic environmentalists who support human abortion should shut up. But in his attack on evolution (December 1988) Mark D. Rentz's slashing irony carelessly wounds both reason and religion itself. We shouldn't throw out the condor chicks with the bath water.

Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection in no way implies the nonexistence of God. It's an explanation for why organisms change over time. It's the only theory we have of where different species come from, and it's a pretty good one.

But Mr. Rentz protests that mere natural selection couldn't have made a rational creature like man — instead, God must have. That just begs the question, *how* did God do it? I see no reason why He could not have used natural selection if He chose.

So, Mr. Rentz asks, what's wrong with stamping out condors, pandas, and tsetse flies, if natural selection and extinction are all part of the Plan? To be a conservationist, must one be a godless, Bambi-eyed supporter of Dukakis? Mr. Rentz overlooks the point that it isn't fitting to turn up your nose at the irreplaceability of the Lord's handiwork.

To take the still longer view, God gave man dominion and stewardship over His other creatures. I don't want to be the one who must explain things to St. Peter if we turn the world into a parking lot. Do you?

—Duncan Maxwell Anderson
New York, NY

Mr. Rentz Replies:

As I wrote in my article, I no longer believe in the theory of evolution, except to say I agree with C.S. Lewis when he said, "It can even be argued that what Darwin really accounted for was not the origin, but the elimination of species." Too much critical of Darwinism has been written for anyone to say, "It's the only theory we have of where different species come from, and it's a pretty good one."

But the main point I was trying to make is simply this: a Christian is commanded to be caretaker of the earth, including California condors and baby seals; the evolutionist has no similar mandate to be his brother's zoo keeper.

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SOME STUDIES HAVE failed to find that executions have any success in deterring homicides. But according to sociologist Steven Stack of Auburn University in the *American Sociological Review* (August 1987, vol. 52, pp. 532-540), those studies have been methodologically flawed by the highly questionable assumption "that the public is more or less aware of executions and that they are well-informed of every execution." They have therefore neglected to test "the thesis that the deterrent effect of executions is a function of the amount of media exposure given to executions." "If the public is unaware of executions," Stack notes, "they can have very little impact on homicide."

Setting out to compensate for that error, Stack compared murder rates in months with highly (and nationally) publicized execution stories with those in months without such stories. Over a period from 1950 to 1980, he found that in 16 different months in which widely-reported executions took place, an average of 30 fewer people were murdered than in an ordinary month. Publicity, as Stack hypothesized, was a vital ingredient. Nearly 600 little-publicized executions in the study had scant effect on the homicide rate. But "[i]n all but four cases, the expected number of homicides in months with [well-publicized] execution stories is greater than the actual number—results we would anticipate from the standpoint of the deterrence view."

Stack cautions against too-high expectations for deterring murder with capital punishment, noting among other things that "as executions become more common, the amount of press coverage tends to decline," and predicting that an expanded number of executions "will perform more of a retribution than a deterrence function." That is not as bad as it sounds. Retribution must be the first object of the death penalty; if it were not the just reward of murderers, then no amount of deterrence would justify its application. But it is also good to know that some 30 American citizens will remain alive because Theodore Bundy, as of sunrise last January 24, does not. (MK)

NONE DARE CALL IT TREAson when a former US President intrigues with the head of an unfriendly foreign government. But when Jimmy Carter met with Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega on February 2, Vice President Quayle had the courage to say: "Obviously, when you have a former President meeting with heads of state we don't meet with, it has a chance of complicating matters." To say the least.

Both Carter and the Vice President were in Caracas attending the inauguration of Venezuela's new president, but while Mr. Quayle was on official business, Mr. Carter was only a tourist playing at diplomacy. It's a game that virtually anybody can play: Jesse Jackson, Jim Wright, Armand Hammer, Dr. Bernard Lown. The only trouble is, it is patently illegal. The Logan Act of 1799 was designed to prevent just this sort of usurpation of executive functions, and it does not matter if the usurper is a Soviet-loving physician, a Soviet-loving businessman, a shifty politician, or an ex-President. This is not Mr. Carter's first offense. Two years ago, he and Gerald Ford arranged a conference in Atlanta, at which they collogued with Soviet representatives and did their best to portray the United States as the chief obstacle to arms reduction. Carter even openly contradicted Navy Secretary John Lehman's description of Soviet treaty violations. Mr. Carter should be tried, convicted on his own testimony, and given the maximum sentence.

The paltry fine ($5,000) and prison term (three years) might deter future amateurs from meddling into affairs of state, but beyond that the United States needs to rethink its treason laws, which have always erred on the side of timidity. It is difficult to imagine any great nation in history tolerating such intrigues between leading citizens and the heads of foreign and unfriendly governments.

The great Athenian statesman, Themistocles, was exiled on just such a charge, and in the reign of Charles II the Earl of Danby was impeached on charges of high treason, because as treasurer he had written a letter to his ambassador to France, instructing him to cut a secret deal with Louis XIV. The first charge against Danby was that he had engrossed royal power by conducting affairs of state without the participation of the secretaries of state or the Privy Council.

A more recent and more familiar case is the Norwegian statesman Vidkun Quisling, who as a leader of a party out of power intrigued with the Germans, who eventually installed him as their puppet ruler. Of course, Mr. Carter does not expect such favors from Daniel Ortega or his Soviet friends. It is reward enough to be back on the evening news. (TF)

"I'M TIRED of having to go to the office armed," my wife said one day last March. She was not alone in going armed—especially not since the local chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union had entered the case of the "Center City Stalker," a young black man who had committed a series of robberies and sexual assaults between January and March of 1988 in Center City, Philadelphia. Rumors circulated each day of additional attacks that had not been publicized in order to prevent wholesale panic.

Center City was blanketed with police sketches of the suspect, and many a young black man took a trip to police headquarters for questioning because of a resemblance to the man in the sketch.

This was too close to fascism for the comfort of the local ACLU, which sought an injunction in federal court to prevent the police from taking people in just because they looked like the man in the sketch—translation: just because they're black. The police department and the city caved in to this legalistic lunacy, agreeing in an out-of-court settlement not to take in anyone

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for questioning who didn't volunteer to go (if the only probable cause was a resemblance to the man in the sketch).

There was outrage over this decision — especially among women who ride the dangerous subway into Center City each day, and among street cops who were restricted in what they could do with the evidence of their own eyeballs — but the decision had the wholehearted support of the town's progressive forces, and no one in an official capacity spoke out against it. The Stalker would have been able to reduce his chances of being apprehended (if he happened to be stopped) by politely refusing to volunteer his time to aid in the pursuit of justice.

Admittedly, it's possible to do a lot of hairsplitting about how enthusiastic a cop is allowed to be in hauling in suspects on the evidence of police sketches — drawn, often as not, with the help of people under a good deal of emotional stress. Sitting in an armchair in a law office, or judge's chambers, it's easy to mark a dividing line between acting on reasonable probability and engaging in old-fashioned rousting. On the street, it's more difficult, especially when reticence could enable a criminal to attack the next victim — an error that would be hard for a cop to live with.

My wife advanced the novel idea that she would ask the ACLU to file a class-action suit on behalf of all women who live or work in Center City against the police department — on the theory that their capitulation to the idiotic demands of the ACLU was a violation of the right of these women to receive the police protection they pay for. Kate's not a lawyer, but she recognized the out-of-court settlement for what it was — a formal agreement to commit nonfeasance on a massive scale, sanctioned by a US district judge.

We got lucky, though. Police arrested a suspect, thirty-five-year-old Reynard Gregory, on March 23, 1988. On November 11, after a day and a half of deliberation, a jury found him guilty on all counts — ten robberies, three attempted rapes, and seven indecent assaults. Last month was sentenced to somewhere between one hundred and two hundred years in jail.

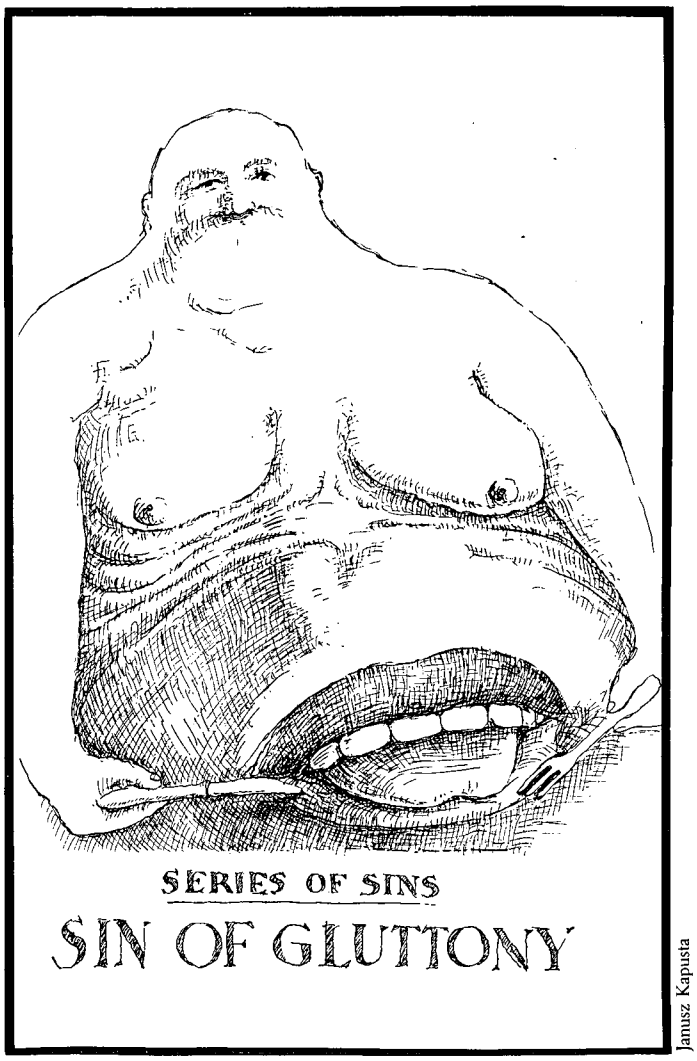
It doesn't seem to matter to anyone here now, but the original police sketch of the "Center City Stalker" — which the ACLU felt provided police with an excuse for racial harassment — turns out to have been a very good likeness of the convicted man.

— J. Michael Bolinski

CONTINUING LEGAL education is imposed on lawyers by the Missouri Bar Association and the Missouri Supreme Court, and right before the November election I took a day to fulfill the requirements.

The only CLE show in town at the time was a seminar presented by the Missouri Association of Trial Attorneys on using a vocational expert in Social Security, workers' compensation, divorce, and personal injury claims. Though this program was unlikely to benefit any of my clients, who are mostly imprisoned violent criminals, it fit into my schedule perfectly. And I knew I would not need to worry that my possible failure to master this new material would jeopardize my ability to claim credit for attending the presentation. The CLE requirements demand no accountability on the lawyers' part for the material put forth. Indeed, the CLE requirements are only to pay your money (in this case $100), and register reasonably near the beginning of class. Neither proficiency nor further attendance is demanded. The gentleman seated next to me, for example, arrived around 10:00 a.m. and was gone after lunch.

The seminar attracted a small audience, in part because lawyers have been discouraged by "this administration" from pushing disability cases. The man next to me volunteered that he used to do a lot of Social Security Disability work — that is, trying to prove that a client cannot work any-



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where in the country at any job in the economy for a twelve-month period (which is considered permanently)—until the judges started "screwing me out of my fee." A lawyer on a case that had both Workers' Compensation and Social Security Disability aspects would be paid for only one, my neighbor complained, on the reasoning that the work done on both was identical to the work needed for just one—"not that I wanted to double dip." (In Missouri a lawyer gets 25 percent of a Workers' Compensation award; his fee is provided by statute.)

The featured vocational expert appeared to be an honest man genuinely devoted by training and instinct to getting people back to work. Everyone knows that some disabilities preclude work, and fairness requires that disability income be paid in those cases. However, an innocent observer of this seminar would have concluded that deceit and subterfuge are more important than disability in getting a person compensation. The initial focus in handling hearings before an administrative law judge is not just to win the case for the client, but to guarantee a second chance in the event of a loss. One lawyer-panelist suggested the employment of a device he said he had learned in a CLE on criminal law: "trick-the-judge questions." These are hypotheticals suggested by attorneys to the judge that are probably improper for one reason or another. If the judge asks them of the claimant and subsequently decides against him, the lawyers are fairly certain that an appellate court will remand the case to the hearing judge and order a new hearing. The lawyer then has a chance to try a more successful approach the second time. The lawyer-panelists, incidentally, said that any administrative law judge who decides a case without getting the opinion of a vocational expert is practically asking for a remand. "If I get to court," began the kindly gentleman next to me, "and see that the judge will not be questioning a vocational expert, do I request that he do so?" Even lay readers can probably guess the correct answer: "Of course not." Hence, while proceeding with the trial under these circumstances is probably a waste of time and taxpayers' money, it provides the best of circumstances for the claimant's lawyer: possible immediate, outright victory, but at least a guaranteed second chance in the event of a loss. Keep your mouth shut.

This is not the end of the moral gray area. The vocational expert mentioned a judge who had watched a claimant sit through a two-hour hearing. After the parties had left the courtroom, the judge remarked to the VE: "I can't believe that guy. He claimed that he couldn't sit comfortably for more than 12 minutes, yet he sat through a two-hour hearing and neither rose nor squirmed once." This anecdote illustrated lesson number two: prepare your client for trial. One lawyer-panelist said that he and his client practice for the hearing (which usually runs well under two hours) on three separate occasions for two hours at a stretch. During these rehearsals, the client is instructed to interrupt the hearing every 30 minutes and ask the judge, "Excuse me, Your Honor. May I stand up for a few minutes?" After a proper interval, he is to again interrupt the proceedings to ask to sit down. The seminar audience emitted knowing chortles, and the lawyer did some backpedaling. The clients, he asserted, are "intimidated by the process" and will endure agony rather than risk court censure by requesting assistance or relief. Therefore, insisting on such a script merely reinforces the claimant's natural inclinations. And, if the hearing judge isn't persuaded by the performance, the claimant's requests are on the record and may tear at the appellate judge's heartstrings later on.

Effective advocacy takes all forms. After lunch, another lawyer-panelist asked the VE to read the file on a client of his who was injured in an accident and was now seeking damages in a personal injury claim. The lawyer wanted to know what the man's chances were for employment and whether he should call a VE to testify to the man's now limited usefulness in the job market. The VE stated that the man's refusal to accept rehabilitative services would be frowned upon by a jury. The lawyer then suggested he might put this VE on retainer so that the defense couldn't call him to the stand to criticize his plaintiff's attitude.

One lawyer-panelist told of a woman who was sent to a motel for training as a maid. She was given clear instructions on cleaning a room and was left by herself. Three hours later, her supervisor returned to the room the trainee was to have finished and found his new employee watching television in the dirty room. Lazy? Not on your life, said the lawyer. The woman suffered from an attention span deficiency and was entitled to Social Security Disability income.

—*Betsy Clarke*

JOHN WILLIAM Corrington's early death ended the career of a distinguished and prolific literary figure. His first book appeared in 1961; it was followed by three other books of poetry, numerous novels, and four of the best short story collections of our times. He had stories selected for the *Best American Short Stories* in 1972, 1976, 1977, and the *O. Henry Awards Collection* for 1976. Besides being a screenwriter with his wife, Joyce (*The Omega Man, Boxcar Bertha, The Killer Bees*), he was for a period a practicing attorney. Much of his fiction reflects his concern for law and justice, and the sometime difference in the two. He particularly admired the political philosopher Eric Voegelin, whose work he studied for many years, and about whom he wrote several essays. At the time of his death he was editing Voegelin's lectures on law for publication in the *Collected Works of Eric Voegelin*. One critic has pointed out the "nugget of faith" at the center of Corrington's mentality and work, "without which both the intellect and emotions become the instrument of caprice." R.I.P.

—*William Mills*

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—*Novelist Robert Stone in the November 1988* Harper's.

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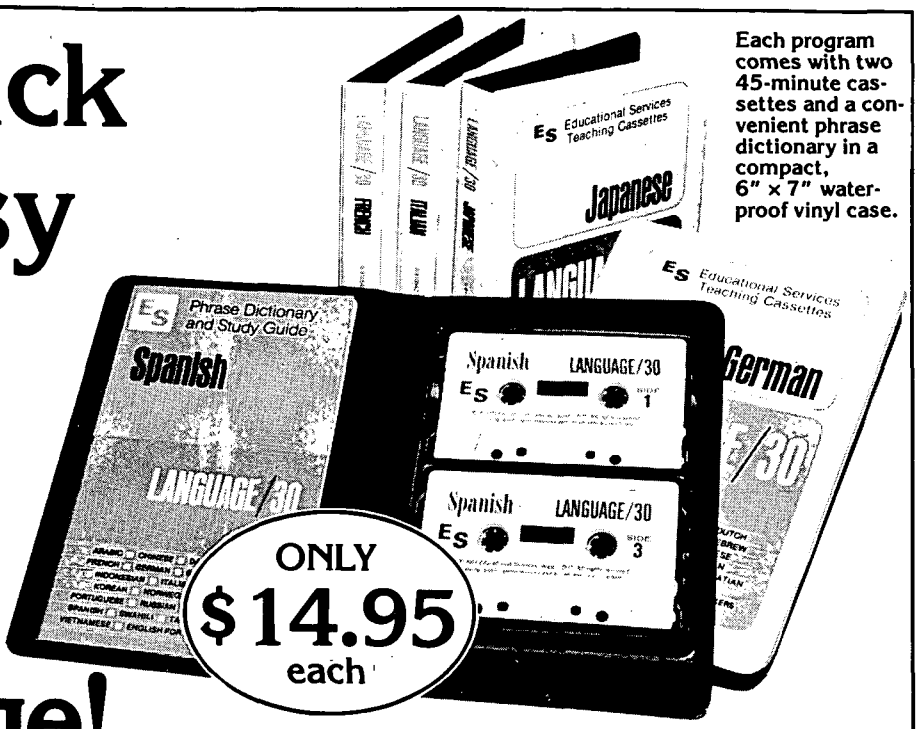

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1366665. Finnish	1429224. Latin	
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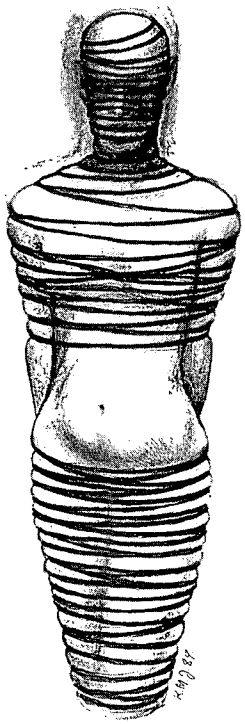

Life and Death in a House Divided

by Thomas Fleming

The Supreme Court's recent decision to review a Missouri abortion case has raised the spirits of the pro-life movement. In his appeal, Missouri's attorney general asked the Court to reconsider *Roe* v. *Wade*, the landmark civil rights decision that made pregnant women and their physicians sole arbiters over who is born and who is not born in the United States, and there are high hopes that the conservatives on the Court may seize the opportunity to begin the long process of rolling back the 1973 decision.

Historically, of course, abortion was illegal, but before 1973 jurisdiction was left up to the states, as it still is for ordinary cases of murder, arson, rape—all of which were quite properly capital crimes. However, the legal politicians on the Court decided—with no other guidance than their private imaginations—that abortion was both a technical matter that required the assistance of trained professionals (physicians willing to prostitute their skills) and a newly-discovered right to privacy of a newly-discovered oppressed minority (pregnant women).

If the Court was hell-bent on destroying children, if death were the only object, the justices could have skirted the dangerous issue of rights and restored something like the Roman *patria potestas*, which gave fathers the power of life and death over their dependents. Since women are equal under the law, the Court need only have recognized that such painful decisions could best be made within families. Parents would obviously have to make the decision for underage daughters who skipped the contraception chapter in their high-school sex manuals.

There is a sizable number of decent and moral people who could have lived with such a decision, although most would still complain against the Court's delusion that it had jurisdiction. But with a few strokes of the pen, the justices virtually eliminated the family as an organic part of society by pitting fathers against mothers, and parents against children—unborn as well as born. The Court was not content to rest on its laurels, but rapidly proceeded to "protect" the rights of teenage unwed mothers against meddling parents.

Families were not the only victims. States and local communities lost their ability to regulate the health and welfare of their people. They cannot even insist that the procedure be performed in regular hospitals, much less impose any restrictions that might stigmatize abortion as immoral or express a preference for life.

All of this was to be expected. There has never been a rebellion in the name of "rights" that did not end up strengthening the central government at the expense of

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every institution that protects individuals from the brute power of the state. There is no other way to read such legislative breakthroughs as the Fourteenth Amendment, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and 20 years of feminist legislation, except as deliberate assaults on the traditional privileges of families, communities, and states. By liberating women from husbands and fathers, we have, at best, made them wards of the state. At worst, we have set both men and women free from their natural element. G.K. Chesterton once wrote a story about an anarchist who went so far off the deep end as to liberate the fishes from the fishbowl. It was hardly a day before he tried to blow up a house full of people. It took us only nine years after the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to legalize abortion on demand.

But the rights issue that comes closest to the abortion controversy is not the rights of women but children's rights. Once upon a time it used to be assumed that parents by and large looked out for their children's best interests. In the past hundred years, however, laws have been passed on the contrary assumption, that parents either do not know or do not care enough to see that their children are properly educated, clothed, and fed. Child protection statutes do not even provide routine *habeas corpus* protection to parents suspected of abusing their children. Worst of all, neither the laws nor the self-styled experts are willing to distinguish between normal, intact families, where the incidence of abuse is very low, and the alternative life-styles (broken homes, single-parent households, etc.), where the risk may be 40 times greater than in traditional families.

The result is that in the name of children's rights, children can be removed from decent and caring families simply on the accusation of a teacher or a plea-bargaining child-molester, so long as the case attracts the attention of a progressive prosecutor.

After all, if children have rights they can hardly be expected to defend those rights all by themselves (although there are children's rights advocates who insist that kids be allowed to vote, hold public office, and engage in sexual relations with each other and with adults). Who will protect the rights of children from bigoted parents? Why, the courts of course, or (as Howard Cohen suggests in *Equal Rights for Children*) children's agents.

If the government ever does decide that children are legal persons, endowed with all the rights of citizens, it will be writing a death sentence not only on the family but on the American tradition of responsible self-government. That goes for unborn children as well as born. But strange as it may seem, the pro-life movement gives only lukewarm support to the states rights tactics that have a chance of winning, and actually prefers laws and amendments that would absolutely prohibit abortion by guaranteeing an inalienable right to life.

Setting aside the practical problem of attempting to impose the will of Utah and Nebraska upon the whole US, anti-abortionists ought to realize that a right-to-life amendment would not have the effect they desire. Many European countries with liberal abortion laws actually include a right-to-life provision in their constitutions, as well as a general presumption in favor of life. West Germany, for example, permits abortion if pregnancy threatens the mother's physical or mental health, if the baby is likely to suffer from birth defects, or (through the twelfth week) if the pregnancy works a serious hardship, but the West German constitution begins with the ringing declaration that "Everyone shall have the right to life and to inviolability of his person."

Despite the obvious drawbacks and dangers, well-meaning opponents of abortion have increasingly come to adopt the radical language of rights as their first line of offense, extending the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee on the protection of legal persons to the unborn and comparing the anti-abortion campaign with the abolitionist and civil rights movements.

The only result of any declaration of children's rights—born or unborn—will be to strengthen the government's hand in its ongoing struggle to supplant the family. If there is an absolute and unquestionable right to life, then abortion will be only one of the options forbidden to pregnant women. What about smoking or drinking or, indeed, any activity that carried to an extreme could threaten the child's life or reduce its birth weight?

A District of Columbia superior court has already sent one drug-abusing expectant mother to jail in an effort to protect her unborn child. The lady's actual offense was check forgery, for which she would have ordinarily received probation, but the judge decided on the stiffer penalty when a drug test turned up positive for cocaine. In a parallel case in California, a mother of a brain-damaged child was jailed for ignoring her doctor's injunction against using drugs and engaging in sexual activity during her pregnancy. The case was dropped, but there is a mounting debate over fetal rights and women's rights.

If the state is to protect life at any cost, doesn't this imply a financial obligation to preserve the life of any child, no matter how deformed or hopeless, no matter what it takes? That means a considerable outlay of tax money, and in parallel cases, when the state assumes the burden, it also lays down the law. The routine justification for antismoking laws and seat belt regulations is the cost imposed on the public. It does not take too much imagination to foresee the time when couples will have to submit to genetic screening if they wish to receive a permit to conceive. Couples who defied the law would be compelled to abort the illegal (and therefore rightless) child.

Because we are not all entirely crazy, this stark scenario might not be played out to the last act, but the underlying logic is inescapable. Whenever the state discovers or redefines a right, the implementation of that right is subject to state control. Government, and not families, would have to decide cases of conflicting rights. Just this year, a judge decided that even though child custody was granted to a divorced mother, she could not rear the child as a Catholic. When the mother persisted in taking the child to Mass, she was given a jail sentence. The sentence was suspended, but there is no doubt that she will go to jail if she attempts to exercise her freedom of religion again.

The dialectic of rights always turns to tragedy in which "Force will clash with force and right with right" (*Choephoroe*) as each side turns inevitably to illegal demonstrations and even violence. Increasing numbers of pro-lifers, frustrated by political failure, see Operation Rescue as

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the answer. Prominent evangelical clergymen now endorse Operation Rescue's illegal tactics, and Jerry Falwell has even gone to Atlanta to get himself arrested in demonstrations that must remind Atlanta police of an earlier generation of illegal protests. Mr. Falwell had hoped to enlist the support of other prominent Southern Baptists, but Atlanta minister Charles Stanley, former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was not persuaded by his colleagues: "If blocking an entrance is permitted, then why not . . . even destruction of those who are performing the procedure? Anarchy and chaos will ultimately result."

Anarchy and chaos—what else is the object of civil disobedience? The most conspicuous protester is Joan Andrews, sentenced to five years in prison for her part in taking over an abortion facility in Florida. Any humane person can understand her motives and wish the judge had exercised more clemency. But frankly speaking, Miss Andrews did not make it easy. She refused to cooperate in any way at her trial, declaring the United States to be a Nazi regime that lost all legitimacy after *Roe* v. *Wade*.

Even moderates in the pro-life movement regard Joan Andrews as a martyr, but by her own words she has virtually accused herself of treason—and not for the first time: before discovering abortion, Andrews was already a career civil disobedient, who began by protesting the Vietnam War. Life is not the only issue for which such people are willing to break the law. Nuclear reactors, war, the government's immigration policies, the ratio of minorities in a school system—all have attracted the support of Christian activists, many of whom are now marching with Operation Rescue.

Most sensible people in the pro-life movement have warned that the Gospel does not teach anything like this reckless disregard for law and order. Charles Colson, while expressing sympathy for Joan Andrews, points out that "Generally speaking it is not justified to break a just law in order to protest an unjust law." Even more to the point is the strong statement made by John Whitehead and Franky Schaeffer (in *Arresting Abortion*), that "We are commanded to be good citizens until such time as we are ordered by the law and government to do those things contrary to the law of God."

If the US were governed by a Nazi regime, there would be no question of permitting abortions. A Nazi state would be commanding some parents to murder their "inferior" children, while punishing with death any "superior" parents who tried the same thing. Such violations of natural law do not just permit opposition; they require resistance and rebellion. In America, the state is not compelling women to kill their babies. It is simply looking the other way. If parents really want to commit infanticide, in most cases they can get away with it—whatever the law says. The fact that a large number are willing to do it—that is the real horror, and not the fact that the federal government allows it.

We cannot afford to do nothing, but concern for the nation's moral health does not free us from the obligation to obey the law, and I would urge the demonstrators to spend their time reading St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans or Luther's savage denunciation of the rebellious peasants and his repeated injunctions against disobedience. If we are free to violate property laws, why stop there? Suppose we did manage to secure a national law against abortion. Why shouldn't conscientious feminists defy the law?

Respect for law is not restricted to Lutherans and Baptists. The Calvinist Rousas J. Rushdoony, so frequently accused of "theocracy," knows better. In the January issue of his *Chalcedon Report*, Rushdoony denounces illegal tactics as "non-Christian and revolutionary" and observes: "To use ungodly means is a way of saying that God's grace and power are insufficient resources for Christian action. It means abandoning Christ for the methods of His enemies. . . . When the leaders of the people wanted to force Pilate's unwilling hand, they assembled a mob to demonstrate before Pilate and to shut down all protest, screaming, 'Crucify him.'" Indeed. Using the tactics of rights and demonstration is like using a devil to cast out devils. Accused of just such an act of sorcery, Jesus observed that a house divided against itself cannot stand. The American house is already wracked by every sort of dissension. A militant right-to-life movement could be the last straw.

I do not wish to be too harsh against well-meaning Christians who are understandably eager to wrap themselves in the popular mantle of civil rights. If they are impatient with the slow progress of the courts and with Congress's refusal to act, they ought to concentrate on state and local politics, where the real battles will ultimately be fought. If they wish to resist the current law, they cannot do it legitimately either as private citizens or as members of conspiratorial little groups. They need to galvanize their towns and cities into action against the abortion clinics. It is a tactic that has been employed successfully in campaigns against smut. Of course the federal courts will decide in favor of the clinics, but then it will be up to communities and states to stand upon their lawful rights.

In the early days of our republic, when the Federalist Party was pushing the central government's authority at the expense of the states, Kentucky and Virginia passed a set of resolutions that clearly stated the rights of states to resist such interference. In 1828 John C. Calhoun refined upon this argument by declaring that the final arbiters in any constitutional question were the original parties to the Constitution, the states, who had the right to interpose a veto upon unjust or illegal legislation. As Clyde Wilson writes, "This program Calhoun defended not as a step toward disunion but as an alternative to it."

Today, such a strategy needs to be revived by states that have seen their laws overturned, school systems restructured, and institutions corrupted by the federal courts. Something like nullification has been resorted to already by a number of governors who have banned the shipment of toxic waste into (or even through) their states.

When states, through their democratically elected legislatures, have drawn up laws regulating, restricting, or forbidding abortions, then these same states, acting as lawful communities, can legitimately insist upon their constitutional rights without in any way undermining respect for law and without arrogating still more power to the government. If the courts will not change their ways, then the only other choices are tyranny or disunion. And that will mean, truly, a crisis in the house divided.

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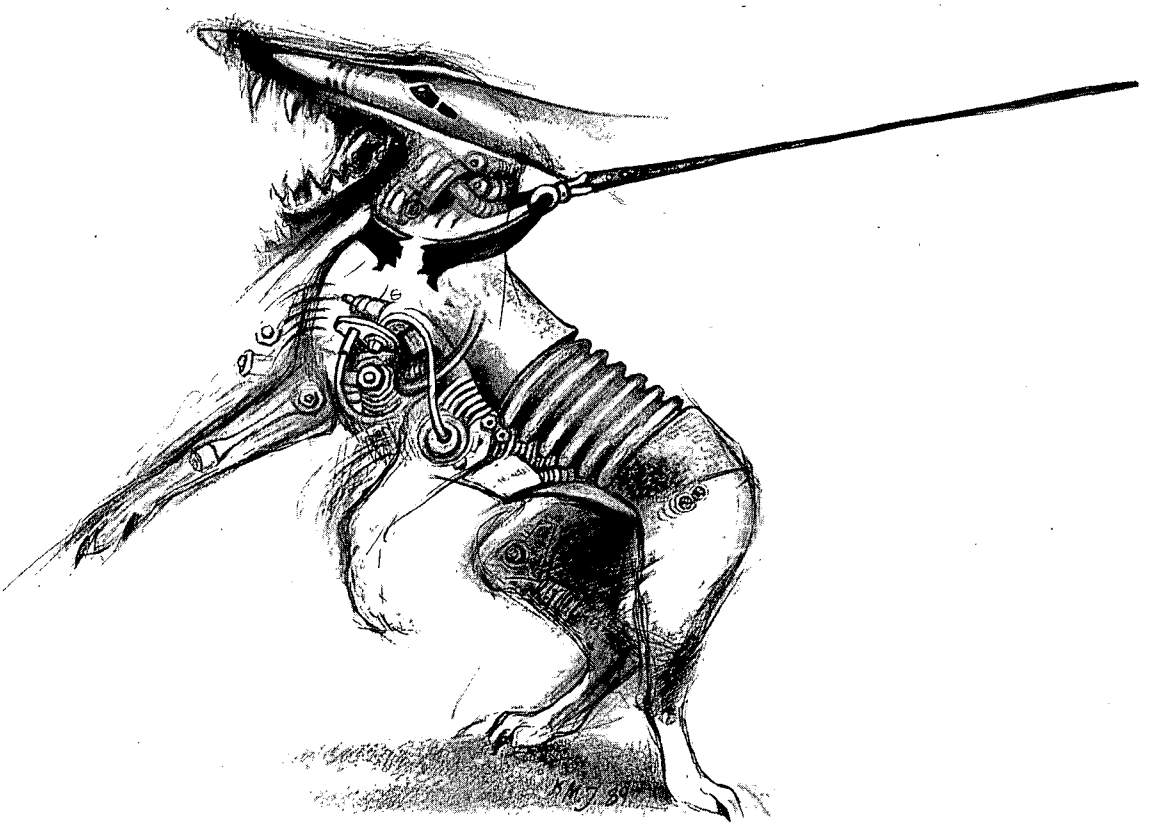

The New Eschatology of Peace

by John Gray

The relations of religious faith with political life in the modern world are riddled with paradoxes. In the Middle East, rapid secularization has provoked a fundamentalist revulsion, which seeks vainly to stem the tide of modernity that, at the same time, gives it all its strength. Middle Eastern fundamentalism is little more than a modernist frenzy, but it is at any rate a religious response to the decadence of Islamic culture and the challenges of secularization. The situation in Europe has been notably different, in that there the waning of Christianity has been accompanied by the displacement of religious passions into avowedly secular political movements. This European development has been observed by many theorists of 20th-century totalitarianism, including some (such as Arthur Koestler) who were among its most distinguished intellectual converts. Among Europeans, the decay of transcendental faith has resulted in the invasion of political life by religious longings. This suggests an ironic definition of European secularization — as the process by which social life comes to be dominated by unnoticed (because repressed) religious passions. In the United States, by contrast, there is little evidence of mass secularization. Instead, religious faith has itself undergone a metamorphosis, in which both Christianity and Judaism have been conscripted into service as dependable allies of modern aspirations for progress and global improvement. Whether this has taken the form of the antinomian absurdities of liberation theology or the neo-conservative appropriation of religion as a support for bourgeois democracy, the result has been the same; the Judeo-Christian perception of human life as a tragedy has been lost, and religious faith has been subordinated to the purposes of ephemeral political movements.

Given the paradoxical interaction of religious with political life in the present century, it is a serious error to try to understand the current peace movements in Europe and America in altogether secular terms. This is a mistake often committed by the peace movement's critics and opponents, when they represent it as a movement dedicated primarily to promoting the strategic interests of the Soviet Union. For, whatever the truth in claims about Soviet infiltration and funding of the activities of the peace people — and I do not doubt that such claims contain much truth — their movement has a dynamism of its own, which it is perilous to ignore. The sense of apocalyptic mission that inspires the peace people has its origin, not in any realistic recognition of

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the dangers of nuclear war, but in a mutation of Christian eschatological hope, which affects believers and unbelievers alike. The passions fueling the peace movement can be understood only as the end result of a centuries-long process of moral inversion, beginning with the political religions of the Enlightenment, and now coming close to conquering the Christian churches themselves.

If we cannot expect the peace people to listen to reason, it is because theirs is a movement springing from the decadence of Christian life and from the moral paralysis of those whose lives have been robbed of any transcendental dimension. The curious belief of the peace people that the specter of nuclear annihilation can be exorcised by a series of public moral gestures becomes intelligible when we attribute to them a profane variation on Christian eschatology, from which divine providence and original sin have both been deleted, leaving only a fury of moral activism and the groundless certainty that the obdurate realities of history and human nature can be overcome by the sheer power of moral commitment.

Certainly the peace movement, including the most explicitly religious elements within it, is wholly untouched by genuine Christian teaching about first and last things. One might have supposed that such teachings, which represent the end of the world as we know it as encompassing an enlargement of the human prospect rather than its mere extinction, would have been especially pertinent to our contemporaries, each of whom knows for a certainty that he belongs to what could be the last generation of human beings. The sense of providential guidance, which the real Christian eschatology preserves even about the prospect of nuclear annihilation, may enable us to contemplate that most terrifying of possibilities with something other than sheer despair. But the transcendental dimension of Christian hope, which insists that even the destruction of this world cannot be an unredeemed tragedy, is precisely the vision that is repudiated by the peace activists, and often repudiated on Christian grounds. How has this decadence of Christian spirituality come about, and what does it portend for the peace movement?

The ultimate spiritual origins of the peace movement's virtual conquest of the Christian churches are to be found in the character of the Christianity of the Gospels as an antipolitical and indeed antinomian movement. In its earliest form, Christian faith and practice were conducted in daily expectation of the end of things, and for that reason, more than for any other, they were indifferent or hostile to the institutions of the family and government whose disciplines figure so prominently in the religions of the Romans and the Jews. Primitive Christianity neglected the sad business of sustaining political order and of prescribing for the ordinary dilemmas of life, not because it was supposed that the necessities of power and of moral constraint could ever be removed from the world, but rather from a conviction of the evanescence and imminent destruction of the world itself. Hence the famous *Interimsethik* of the first Christians, and the intense cult of moral individuality in which this was expressed.

It is only in Paul and, above all, in Augustine, that we find an accommodation of Christian moral life to the perennial demands of human nature, because in these writers eschatological hopes have come to refer to a spiritual metamorphosis, possible at any time, rather than to a historical event. Buttressed by the doctrine of original sin, Pauline and Augustinian Christianity could coherently envisage Christian moral life as a permanent tension between the perspective of eternity—which is the perspective of grace and of the forgiveness of sins—and the perspective of this world. In Augustine, and certainly in the theology of Aquinas, Christian morality appeared to have reached, not indeed a *modus vivendi*, but an inevitably contradictory and for that reason a highly fruitful relationship of participation in the demands of worldly life. It thereby escaped the great danger of Christianity, that of loosening social bonds for the sake of moral individuality, and of subverting civilization in the pursuit of purity of heart.

This was the hazard, if not the reality, of early Christianity—that the sense of human life as bounded by mortality and by every other sort of finitude, and limitation, so prominent in Jewish experience and (in a very different idiom) in the pagan philosophers, should be swamped by a triumphant moral hope. Partly because of the story of the Passion itself, the perception of tragedy always remained an essential element in Christianity, but it had from the first to contend with an explosive moral hope in which the accommodations of the ancient world, Jewish as much as pagan, were transvalued. The synthesis of Christianity's transcendent hopes with the necessities of earthly life wrought by Augustine created Christendom as a civilization that lasted over a thousand years, and is only now unmistakably on the decline.

Nothing could be further from the truth than the conservative cliché that the decline of Christianity in modern times is owed to a return to a pagan outlook. Pagan religious sensibility, insofar as we can reconstruct it from our understanding of spiritual life in Greece and Rome, was a matter of local piety and natural reverence and was altogether lacking in the dimension of individualism and moral optimism that infused early Christianity. When a pagan moral life is revived, as perhaps it is in Machiavelli's writings and in the lives of some of his contemporaries, it is a moral life centered around the struggle for a strong city-state—a struggle in which the promptings of Christian conscience are swept aside. The pagan morality as we find it revived (or at least admired) in the Renaissance is a morality of energy and tragedy, contemptuous of Christian moral scruples and avowedly entirely worldly. This pagan morality is, above all, entirely devoid of the sense of human history as a progressive moral drama which Christianity had inculcated, and because it expected little in the way of any fundamental improvement in human affairs, it could not issue in the intemperate moralism to which Christianity has often succumbed. As Michael Polanyi says in his study *The Logic of Liberty*, "Had the whole of Europe been at the time of the same mind as Italy, Renaissance Humanism might have established freedom of thought everywhere, simply by default of opposition. Europe might have returned to—or if you like relapsed into—a liberalism resembling that of pre-Christian antiquity. Whatever may have followed after that, our present disasters would not have occurred."

A recrudescence of paganism could not have led to our

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present troubles, if only because of the extreme moral modesty of paganism. As against the vast moral hopes that Christianity has kindled in mankind, paganism expressed an attitude of resignation and fatalism in regard to moral misfortune, which is reflected in all the reflective philosophies — Epicurean as much as Stoic — of late antiquity. Never was it supposed that imperfection was evanescent, or tragedy conquerable by will.

The modern political religions express, not a recrudescence of paganism, but a relapse into primitive Christianity, with the early exultant expectation of the end transformed into moral activism, and the civilizing transformation of Christianity by Augustine rejected. Modern political religions are (in Polanyi's invaluable expression) all manifestations of *moral inversion* — the displacement of Christian moral hopes from their natural context in transcendental commitment and their intensification in the resultant spiritual vacuum.

Modern political faith — that of the peace movement no less than those of Marxism and liberalism — is the price we pay for the Christian overrefinement of conscience, when the containing vessels of transcendence and mystery have been shattered by secularization. Eric Voegelin has put this point with unsurpassed clarity in his *The New Science of Politics*: "The characterization of modern political mass movements as neopagan, which has a certain vogue, is misleading because it sacrifices the historically unique nature of modern movements to a superficial resemblance. Modern redivinization has its origins rather in Christianity itself, deriving from components that were suppressed as heretical by the universal church." Or, as the same insight was expressed by Bertrand de Jouvenel in his book *Sovereignty*: "It is a curious thing, moreover, but true, that political applications of the Christian idea of men grew and multiplied at the very time that Christian theology was rejected." The modern political faiths, then, are vehicles for Christian moral hopes, orphaned by being cast out of their natural religious home, and rendered dangerous by their resistance to any doctrine suggesting man's imperfectibility.

In Marxism, moral inversion expresses itself as a cold fury, an explosive conjunction of moral cynicism with utopian commitment. In the peace movement, the apocalyptic conviction of the end of the world evokes an infantile moral rage and a violent resistance to the dimension of tragedy in our present predicament. For let us not suppose that the peace people have ever dwelt on the delicacy of the strategic balance, or the dangers of further proliferation, in any realistic way. If they did, they would soon see that proliferation of nuclear technologies, though it may be retarded, cannot be halted, since it is at bottom only a side-effect of the spread of scientific knowledge. Having grasped this, they would be bound to conclude that the military use of nuclear power, sooner or later, is inevitable in a world of some hundred or so sovereign states, many of which are chronically unstable, some of them ruled by criminals or madmen, and all of them existing in a Hobbesian state of nature in their relations with each other. They would reflect that nothing in human history suggests that we have the wisdom needed to use the destructive powers of modern technologies with restraint, and they would see the problem of nuclear weapons as only one aspect of the larger dilemma posed by the unleashing of powerful technologies on an intractably disordered world. They would realize that agreements for the denuclearization of contested areas of the world are unlikely to be kept when the conflict between contending powers over them becomes serious. They would even perceive that the unilateral disarmament of all the Western powers cannot guarantee release from the danger of nuclear holocaust, since we live no longer in a bipolar world, but in a pluralistic one, in which the People's China, or Qadaffi's Libya, might easily replace the Soviet Union as our chief enemy. If they were able to see all this, the peace people would see the task of statesmanship in our times as one of almost desperate humility — that of staving off disaster, day by day, by finding ever new stratagems for the preservation of the fragile balance of terror.

Perhaps a pagan view of life could tolerate our present predicament without flinching, seeing it as a historical fate against which we may struggle but which we cannot hope to avert. Perhaps also Judaism, with its millennial experience of patience and fortitude, could sustain a clear acceptance of the tragic possibilities of nuclear destruction, which are part of our human condition henceforth. And perhaps a revival of genuine Christianity, with its emphasis upon the evanescence not of evil but of this world itself, could engender the detachment required for wise policy in an age of desperate peril. It cannot be said that present auguries are hopeful for any of these prospects. The religion of the Western intelligentsias remains liberal humanism — surely the most ignoble and banal of any faith to have captured the allegiance of a culture's intellectual leaders. For liberal humanism, which is a sort of pagan this-worldliness denatured of the pagan acceptance of fate and mortality and animated by a delusive vision of world improvement, is of all perspectives that least fitted for our circumstance of mortal danger.

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The sense of apocalyptic mission that inspires the peace people has its origin not in paganism but in a mutation of Christian eschatological hope.

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Nor does Christian culture offer a particularly edifying spectacle. Where it has not been overrun by the fashionable nostrum of secular meliorism, Christianity — especially in its American fundamentalist variants — has been captivated by promises of a technological solution to the danger of nuclear holocaust. For that, surely, is the real appeal of the Strategic Defense Initiative. I do not mean that this is an initiative that should not be supported, since the hysterical response of Soviet publicists to every mention of it suggests its inestimable value in curbing Soviet ambitions. I refer rather to the fraudulent terms in which it has been proposed to, and accepted by, the American people. It should be plain that the Star Wars program cannot do what its most hubristic proponents have claimed for it — deliver America and mankind from the specter of nuclear devastation. The

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proliferation of nuclear technologies across the globe, together with the growing possibilities of nuclear terrorism, rules out any such easy solution. Even in respect of the Soviet Union, the Star Wars shield cannot protect Europe at all, and could be nearly perfect and still (by allowing in a few multi-warhead missiles) allow for the devastation of North America. Whereas it undoubtedly has virtue as a lever against the Soviet Union, SDI has been seized upon as a technical solution for a moral and political dilemma that is probably insoluble.

We return here to the decadence of Western religious culture, which is shown in nothing better than in the endorsement by conservative churchmen of the extravagant claims made for SDI. When it is conservative, the conservatism of Western religiosity is of an Aquarian or New Age description—a conservatism issuing in groundless hopes and based on a repression of the intractabilities of human history. Such a feel-good conservatism is crucially dependent on a climate of prosperity, which will likely be diminished over the next few years. It supports a hopelessly naive optimism, not only about the powers of technology to overcome immemorial tragedies such as war, but also about the reformability of human institutions. And it occludes public perception of the global environment to such an extent that even avowed enmity cannot be recognized. The fusion of Christian meliorism with triumphalist conservatism bodes ill for us.

If this account is at all correct, it follows that we can expect no quick or easy recovery in our culture. The most that can be reasonably hoped for the future is that the trials it contains may chasten the inordinate optimism that, at present, represses the eschatological dimension in our religious traditions, and blinds us to the apocalyptic vision of the real world in which (for the moment) we continue to live. ◈

LIBERAL ARTS

LUTHER ON SECULAR AUTHORITY

We must firmly establish secular law and the sword, that no one may doubt that it is in the world by God's will and ordinance. The passages which establish this are the following: Romans xiii, "Let every soul be subject to power and authority, for there is no power but from God. The power that is everywhere is ordained of God. He then who resists the power resists God's ordinance. But he who resists God's ordinance shall bring himself under condemnation." Likewise, I Peter ii, "Be subject to every kind of human ordinance, whether to the king as supreme, or to the governors, as to those sent of Him for the punishing of evil and for the reward of the good."

This penal law existed from the beginning of the world. For when Cain slew his brother he was in such great terror of being in turn killed that God specially forbade it and suspended the sword for his sake—and no one was to slay him. He would not have had this fear if he had not seen and heard from Adam that murderers should be slain. Moreover God re-established and confirmed it after the Flood in unmistakable terms when He said, "Whoso sheds man's blood, his blood shall be shed again by man." This cannot be understood as a plague and punishment of God upon murderers; for many murderers who repent or are pardoned continue to live, and die by other means than the sword. But it is said of the right of the sword, that a murderer is guilty of death and should in justice be slain by the sword. Though justice be hindered or the sword be tardy, so that the murderer dies a natural death, the Scripture is not on that account false when it says, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." For it is men's fault or merit that this law commanded of God is not carried out; even as other commandments of God are broken.

—*from* Secular Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed

Any man against whom it can be proved that he is a maker of sedition is outside the law of God and Empire, so that the first who can slay him is doing right and well. For if a man is an open rebel every man is his judge and executioner, just as when a fire starts, the first to put it out is the best man. For rebellion is not simple murder, but is like a great fire, which attacks and lays waste a whole land. Thus rebellion brings with it a land full of murder and bloodshed, makes widows and orphans, and turns everything upside down, like the greatest disaster. Therefore let everyone who can, smite, slay, and stab, secretly or openly, remembering that nothing can be more poisonous, hurtful, or devilish than a rebel. It is just as when one must kill a mad dog; if you do not strike him, he will strike you, and a whole land with you. . . .

They cloak this terrible and horrible sin with the Gospel, call themselves "Christian brethren," receive oaths and homage, and compel people to hold with them to these abominations. Thus they become the greatest of all blasphemers of God and slanderers of His holy Name, serving the devil, under the outward appearance of the Gospel, thus earning death in body and soul ten times over. I have never heard of more hideous sin. I suspect that the devil feels the Last Day coming and therefore undertakes such an unheard-of act, as though saying to himself, "This is the last, therefore it shall be the worst; I will stir up the dregs and knock out the bottom." God will guard us against him! See what a mighty prince the devil is, how he has the world in his hands and can throw everything into confusion, when he can so quickly catch so many thousands of peasants, deceive them, blind them, harden them, and throw them into revolt, and do with them whatever his raging fury undertakes.

It does not help the peasants, when they pretend that, according to Genesis i and ii, all things were created free and common, and that all of us alike have been baptized. . . . For baptism does not make men free in body and property, but in soul; and the Gospel does not make goods common, except in the case of those who do of their own free will what the apostles and disciples did in Acts iv. They did not demand, as do our insane peasants in their raging, that the goods of others,—of a Pilate and a Herod,—should be common, but only their own goods. Our peasants, however, would have other men's goods common, and keep their own goods for themselves. Fine Christians these! I think there is not a devil left in hell; they have all gone into the peasants.

—*from* Against the Robbing and Murdering Peasants

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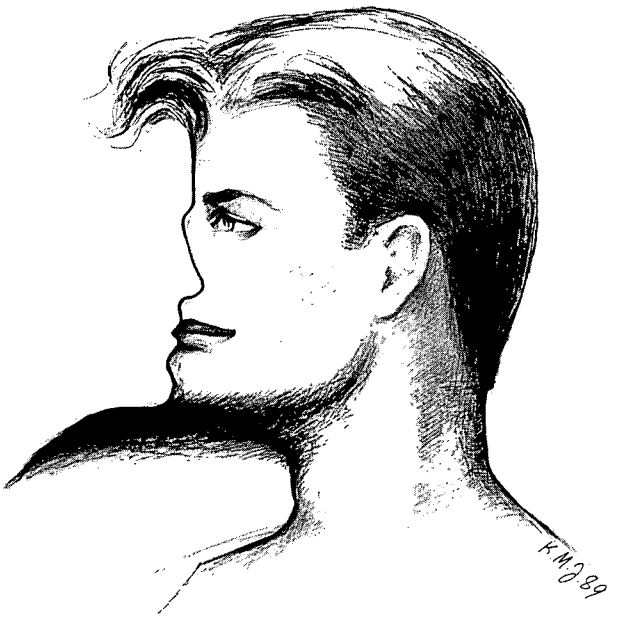
"The" Patriarchy

Notes on the Underground Life of Language

by Frederick Turner



Many words current in our culture carry within them a whole buried world of political assumptions and psychological payoffs. Just to use these words is to submit yourself to a powerful attempt by the words' coiners or redefiners to shape reality and to impose a view of it that they consider advantageous to themselves.

Often such words are used to establish what Bronislaw Malinowski called a "phatic communion," that is, a tacit agreement that draws a line around a "we" and excludes a "they." Such words have a militant as well as a triumphalist role: when used against the "they" these words are a way of skating over uncertainties in the evidence and reasoning that support the in-group's conclusions: the words themselves assume the existence of their referents. After all, how can you have a word that does not refer to something? Yet, as the deconstructionists have shown us, the murdered uncertainties do not go away, but continue to haunt the word, *sous rature*, under erasure, greatly enriching its emotional and ideological force with the semantic guilt of the original erasure.

In a sense, such words are always lies, not because they do not refer to a reality (often, no doubt, they do), but because when used they represent an attempt to sneak through a set of conclusions without arguing them: to shape the playing field in such a way that the nature of the game and perhaps the identity of winners and losers are foregone conclusions. Further: to use such words is essentially an attempt to trick the interlocutor, as in the old journalist's question, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" or the psychoanalyst's, "How do you feel about your mother?" The trick is that to join in dialogue on these terms is already to have conceded the other person's implied assertion. Yet since the asker of the question or the user of the loaded word has opened a conversation, it would be churlish—breaking the fundamental human contract to join in dialogue when it is offered—to refuse to answer. To refuse to answer would, moreover, suggest that you had a guilty conscience, that you had in fact committed the crime of which the "we" convicts the "they."

And this crime is often so horrible and unredeemable—un-Americanism, say, in the 50's, or racism or sexism today—that the very imputation of it disqualifies the accused from standing in his or her own defense; to defend himself against such an accusation is to defend the crime. The vileness of the crime, by a sort of metaphysical "tunneling," affects the guilt or innocence of the accused. The words that are used to do this are words of great power:

Frederick Turner's most recent book, Genesis, *was reviewed in the February issue.*

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they already partly convict their targets of witchcraft.

Examples of such words include, for example, the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance (which automatically and without argument makes it impossible for Zen Buddhists, animalists, polytheists, and atheists to be patriotic Americans) and the slogans of both the pro- and the anti-abortion movements. The subtext of the word "pro-life" includes the following questionable and inconsistent assertions: (1) that what is valuable about a human being is life (yet the skin-tissue I kill when I scratch is alive, and suitably cloned possesses all the genetic inheritance required to produce a new baby Frederick Turner); (2) that human life begins at the moment of conception, not before or after, and not gradually; (3) that a soul is implanted from outside into the human body at conception; and (4) that the word "life" is an acceptable synonym for "soul." The term "pro-life" has the form and appearance of something you could not possibly disagree with. How could someone be "anti-life"?

The same goes for the term "pro-choice." Nobody would be anti-choice. But the word contains just as many questionable assumptions as "pro-life," among others, that: (1) since the fetus is not a human being, *its* choice, if you were to wait around long enough to find out (as you might wait for a sleeping person to wake up in order to ask her something) does not count; (2) getting pregnant in the first place was not a choice — also perhaps (2a) if you think it *was* a choice you are obviously a sexually repressed and dangerous protofascist; (3) the father's choice does not count either; (4) the whole issue is one in which choice is a valid factor, as it is when we choose between brands in the supermarket or between political candidates; rather than one in which choice is not a valid factor, as in the choice of whether or not to kill a neighbor.

The point is that for one who believes (as I do, for instance, though it does not concern this essay) that abortion before the last trimester is a sad but often acceptable substitute for bringing an unwanted baby into the world, the word "pro-choice," though perhaps a nice public relations coup, can produce only Pyrrhic victories. The slogan makes it appear that to agree with it you have to kill and bury any doubts you might have about issues 1, 2, 2a, 3, and 4; doubts that are more horrible as ghosts than as live opponents. On the other hand, a true lover of whims, inconsistencies, and follies — as I hope I am — might find it hard to say goodbye to such a good friend.

Other examples of such haunted and machicolated terms include the word "skills," especially when used in an educational context. This word buries the unargued assumption that a skill is separable from, and implantable in, a human person, and that the content of a mind is unimportant compared to the mechanical methods in which it has been trained. In a deep sense the word denies the original capacity for causation in the human being, and the uniqueness of each human world view, while placing in the hands of those who teach "skills" the reins of the republic. Another word of this kind, which makes up for its lack of subtlety by a certain breathtaking seizure of the initiative, is "needs," as in "my needs." Here what is crudely but effectively concealed is a bold preemptive attempt at a coup: the redefining of what I happen to want as what is necessary for my survival (and what you should therefore give me).

Some terms, like "profit motive," contain two distinct and competing sets of cant. In this case one of them consists in the capitalist's implicit fudging or stretching of the notion of monetary gain to cover all ways in which you might profit from something; and the other implies that anything you do because you want to do it is selfish and exploitative. Could you possibly be motivated by anything other than profit, in its broadest sense — "what doth it profit a man . . ."? Yet wouldn't it be nice for the unmotivated, the failures, those paralyzed by their own self-indulgence, self-hatred, or inertia, to be able to smear all success as basely mercantile in its motivation? "Capitalist," by the way, is another such word, though the brilliant coloration of its inconsistencies is beginning to fade with time, as it becomes harder and harder to distinguish capitalism from modern economic organization in general.

Everyone can find favorite examples of his own. But the need for a cant-detector is no less now than it was in the 18th century, the golden age of cant detection; perhaps greater. Those loaded or haunted words can be dangerous, attracting as they often do much of the free-floating hatred that is still left over from the great spasms of mass cruelty we have endured since the French Revolution. (I am grateful to ZsuZsanna Ozsvath for this insight.) At the same time their fecund absurdities can be a reliable source of entertainment. Thus it might be valuable to develop ways of translating or deconstructing such words into their underlying assertions and payoffs.

One of the richest and most delightful veins of cant can be found in the word "patriarchy," especially when accompanied by its little seal of ontological validity, the definite article: "the patriarchy." If it's a "the," then there must be only one of it (as opposed to there being several different patriarchies and kinds of patriarchies, together with other organizations that are not patriarchal). Moreover, as a "the," it must definitely exist, and all persons must agree that it exists. "A" patriarchy, on the other hand, might or might not exist; you would have to use evidence and reasoning to decide whether something was or was not a patriarchy. Not so "the" patriarchy. If you don't see that it exists, obviously you are so snowed by its propaganda that you are blind to its reality, or you are part of it and involved in a coverup.

Even the nature of the patriarchy is implied by "the." The patriarchy that one means is the bad one, the hegemonic, controlling, oppressive one, to use three more prime examples of the loaded word. "The" somehow rules out any disagreement on the nature and definition of patriarchy, as it rules out any question of whether it is a good or a bad thing, or whether it was good at one time and bad at another. "The" rules out any *investigation* of the issue. Indeed, if the patriarchy is *the* patriarchy, the very use of evidence and reasoning to decide whether it is or not, is already a clear sign that one is a member of that fob-pocketed, bulging-eyed, and beetroot-complexioned fraternity of tyrants.

There does exist, however, a tempting defense against the definite article here. It consists of a deliberate misprision, a delicate little finesse or modulation whereby the "the" could be metamorphosed in a flash so as to take on the quality of

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"the" in "the unicorn," "the phoenix," or "the gods," or, as many baby boomers now use the term, "the Establishment," an ironic reference to the general gremlins of paranoia that inhabit social life. Here the definite article gives its seal of approval not to the existence of the mythical beast, but to the shared agreement to entertain it as a delightful counterfactual object of thought.

But if we employed this defense, we would be robbed of the veridical or scientific use of the term "patriarchy," with the inoffensive indefinite article. We might still want to ask such reasonable questions as, is there such a thing as a patriarchy? Is the society one? Are there other kinds? If "the" patriarchy were just like "the" unicorn, "a" patriarchy might be as hard to find as a unicorn. To keep the package (that is, the word "the") while changing what is inside (that is, from the "the" of a single accepted truth to the "the" of a playfully shared myth) would be entirely in the spirit of the coiners of "the patriarchy," but it would play into their hands by abandoning the criteria of evidence and reasoning.

This essay is in no sense an argument about whether there are or are not societies that can legitimately be termed patriarchies; nor whether there is or is not just one patriarchy, "the" patriarchy; nor whether patriarchy can or cannot coexist with other forms of organization, for instance matriarchy or democracy; nor whether patriarchy dominates a whole society or is just the characteristic structure of a certain sphere of life, the fatherly, while other spheres of life, as the motherly, are governed by a matriarchy; nor whether the manifest decline of the institution of fatherhood in our own society compared to most other societies the world has known — to the extent of mass abandonment by fathers of their wives and children, and universal ridicule of fathers — can be reconciled with the proposition that ours is a patriarchal society; nor how such a society could find its philosophical underpinnings in so fervent an antipatriarchalist as John Locke, who as long ago as the 17th century predicated the modern democratic liberal capitalist state upon the utter abolition of political patriarchy; nor whether fathers or mothers are better off in an ultimate sense; nor whether or not patriarchy is a good thing — or was a good thing in our society while it existed.

The point is that though all these issues are still under investigation by research, imagination, logic, and moral sensibility, and the argument over them is not yet finished, the use of the term "the patriarchy" assumes falsely that the evidence is in and the logic concluded. The term "the patriarchy" asserts by its very existence that there really is this one tyrannical form of organization, and that it privileges one group of people over another, unjustly and in all spheres of life, and that this is no longer — or never was — a subject for argument and legitimate disagreement.

It should be noted that inquisition would probably reveal my own views on this matter to be, if complex, reassuringly "liberal," to use another loaded term. But those views are not the subject of this essay, which is the interesting use of words to deceive and coerce, a small natural history of a special variety of cant.

As we have seen, evidence and reasoning are two of the prime victims of the loaded word. Now, evidence and reasoning are not useful for everything, as anyone should know who uses them regularly. But concealed in the "the"

La Belle Dame Sans Merci

by Thomas Fleming

I spent the night, I could not get to sleep,
in counting out six million Yiddish sheep.
It took more time on the slow Russian tongue
to tell the tale of each Ukrainian,
and every Cossack, Kulak, Finn and Lett —
to count ten million, how can I forget?
I wonder, now and then did Chairman Mao
ask how old so-and-so was doing now?
Forgetting, much like Claudius Roman Emperor,
that he'd dispatched him in a fit of temper.
So many so-and-sos from which to choose
your favorite: rich men, poor men, beggarmen, Jews,
nameless and faceless as each drop of rain
that vanishes upon my window pane.

They were all very careful to explain
the thing that grew inside me felt no pain.
It was routine — they swore they spoke the truth —
no more than pulling out a wisdom tooth.
The room was bright — all porcelain and steel.
The nurses promised that I would not feel
anything. It's strange, this modern math —
six million over one. I take a bath —
such firm athletic flesh (I did not kill!) —
come downstairs, watch TV, and take the pill.

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of "the patriarchy" is an assumption that those who believe in evidence and reasoning do not in fact know the limits of their usefulness, and that they are therefore blind to anything else. This is the mild implication, and it may even serve as a useful corrective for those who might forget the limits. But underneath it is a more extreme assumption, that evidence and reasoning are the classic oppressive tools of the patriarchy; and this implication, because of the economy with which it is packed into the definite article, is normally immune to refutation.

Such a refutation might be: very well, we abandon evidence and reasoning as the basis for making an assertion. On what, then, do we base the assertion that evidence and reasoning should be abandoned? Easy. On our feelings. But that would mean that anyone who did not have those feelings would be quite justified, indeed, correct, in disbelieving the assertion. And to try to argue or persuade that person into a belief that evidence and reasoning should be abandoned would be self-contradictory, as such a person could only be convinced by using evidence and reasoning, which the believer in feelings has forsworn.

There is another answer to the question of what we should base our beliefs on, if not evidence and reasoning: the radical answer, that it is a matter of power. Unlike feelings, power shares with evidence and reasoning the advantage that it is not private, subjective, and incommunicable, but public, intersubjective, and easily demonstrated to others. (So goes the argument, though of course feelings are indeed communicable in poetry and other arts; but we are a long way from poetry here, alas.) Just as power is the only thing that supports the patriarchal rule of evidence and reasoning, so a transfer of power to those who maintain the opposite position is the correct method for convincing those who believe in evidence and reasoning that they are wrong.

So far, so good. But since in this radical view power justifies truth and truth justifies morality, wouldn't those who are in power be morally correct in crushing those who oppose them? Since it is the assertion of such dissenters that the patriarchy is more powerful than they are, then the dissenters are inviting disaster. When the dissenting side is weak, it behooves it to give at least lip service to free speech, reason, tolerance, and so on, even if they are to be discarded once their task is done. The only protection for dissenters who base their morality on power would be the forbearance of the believers in reason, to withhold the brutal exercise of power that their radical opponents would find perfectly justifiable. Perhaps this forbearance might be the Achilles' heel of the patriarchy; however, such a reflection does not sit well with those who would overthrow it because it is tyrannical.

But the payoffs in the term "the patriarchy" are so rich that these fine and airy logical ramifications can expediently be ignored, especially if they are so crushed up into the definite article as to be unrecognizable. What are those payoffs? The best way to examine them is to enter, imaginatively, the unconscious monologue of one who was making the optimal use of its comforts and conveniences—one who had so readjusted his or her personal reward system that the rewards of the term "the patriarchy" would indeed be rewarding. Thus:

"I am unhappy and unfulfilled. I have not created anything that is valuable, because I am so unhappy. In fact, if I took the effort and the risk to create something valuable—the years of service and devotion—it would be useless because I am unhappy, and would achieve nothing. I don't even need to try.

"Actually, creativity doesn't really exist: it's just a term people use when they approve of something, that is, when it serves their interests. What is really valuable—what would make me happy—is the approval of others. But I wouldn't want to be indebted to them for their approval, and be at the mercy of charity offered out of the goodness of their hearts. They should be compelled to approve. The problem is that people approve of happy people, and this isn't fair. People should approve of unhappy people, because the unhappy bear the burden of other people's happiness.

"If my unhappiness were nobody's fault, it would be unbearable, because nobody could ever make it better. There is, as I've already realized, no such thing as creativity, and thus new happiness can't be created out of nothing. Those who claim it can be are lying to protect the store of happiness that they themselves have robbed from other people, a store they maintain by getting the approval of other happy people, and pay for by approving them in turn.

"If my unhappiness were my own fault, it would likewise be unbearable. Because either I would have to do something about it, which I can't because I'm so unhappy, or someone else would have to do something about it, in which case I would feel guilty and indebted to him—since happiness can't be created but only taken away from one person to be given to another. If I just accepted my unhappiness, what would be left of me?—since what I am is my nonacceptance of unhappiness. Besides, this talk of my unhappiness being my fault is just 'blaming the victim.' And the victim is always the good one, the right one, because I am a victim, and I am right and good.

"My unhappiness, then, is the fault of other people, those who are in power over me. Those people are the Jewish bankers—no, correction: the bourgeois property owners—no, correction: the patriarchy. It is the patriarchy that stands between me and the approval of others, between me and happiness, between me and power.

"And they can't deny it. If I feel it, it's real. What can they know? When they imply I'm wrong, that just proves that they are the patriarchy; because only a patriarch would tell you how you are supposed to feel. If you haven't experienced something, you can't know anything about it; all that stuff they preach about 'imaginative sympathy' is just part of their mutual approval game, their patriarchal hoax.

"People can only understand other people's experiences when they have had exactly the same experiences themselves, except that the powerless can always understand what it feels like if you're powerful. (You feel just great.) But the powerful can't understand the feelings of the powerless, and no attempt at communication can succeed. We are all absolutely alone.

"My unhappiness is something unique, special, mine, something that defies all their efforts to define it. And I can see their inability to define it makes them feel unhappy too, which is only fair. Maybe some of the happiness they're losing will come my way. Or maybe they're just pretending

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to be unhappy, and actually they're even happier in the thought that I'm unhappy.

"But at least I know now who the enemy is. He has been crushing me, taking away my power; when I loved him it was a stupid waste, because he collected all the happiness I gave away and kept it for himself. Why should I give my approval away? My power?

"Power is happiness; power is the ability to compel the approval of others. But there are people who seem to be happy, creative, and not particularly powerful. They don't like to be elected to powerful committees, or so they say; and they seem to neither know nor care how to make a committee go their way. What about them? They're the worst of all, because they are secretly maintained by the patriarchy as a false counter-example to my true explanation of the nature of happiness and creativity. Such people should be killed.

"I shall seek out instead the company of those who, like me, are unhappy, powerless, and unfulfilled, and who know that creativity is a hoax. Those people and I are *we*, and we will approve of each other. Together we may be able to achieve majorities on the committees that the patriarchy has so unwisely provided in its effort to present an image of tolerance and democracy.

"And isn't creativity really *this*, after all, this listened-to and approved-of scream of misery, rage, and rebellion, that I can utter in the presence of others like me? Isn't creativity simply doing and saying exactly the opposite of what those 'happy,' 'creative,' powerful people in the patriarchy do and say? Who said this creativity was so difficult and mysterious? After all, it's really quite automatic. All you have to do is study the output of the patriarchy, keeping track of each new idea and form of expression that they introduce, and then just stand it on its head."

This is a fictional self-portrait of only the *ideal* user of the term "the patriarchy" (in its loaded or haunted or tendentious sense). Many of the intoxicating rewards of the term would be wasted on someone who did not fully recalibrate his or her personality and value system so as to take advantage of them. For instance, it might be necessary to adopt "the" patriarchy's own imagined contempt for the task of bearing, raising, caring for, and educating children, a task traditionally regarded as being at least as important and creative as science, art, and government. (Would it be tyrannical, or merely unrealistic, to expect half of the human population to go through the sacrifices and discipline necessary to be great artists?)

But the use of the term in this way does tend to persuade its users to embark on a recalibration of their value priorities. And this reshaping constitutes its peculiar power to transform the world into a place of anguished and frustrated rage, from which one rises as a tragic protagonist, eyes filmed with hot tears, chest shaken by sweet sobs, clad in the streaming robes of self-pity, into a new dawn of justified hatred and certified virtue.

Even without such a full makeover, however, the term can do yeoman service. There is a roaring trade to be driven by the opportunistic and sturdy guardians of our educational and cultural institutions, who may not themselves be psychologically equipped for the full benefits of using "the patriarchy," but can profitably purvey its comforts and delights to those, especially the young and insecure, who can use them as they were meant to be used. Others, by lacing their discourse with an occasional reference to "the patriarchy," can thus cheaply reaffirm their credentials as belonging to the consensus, and so enter into the phatic communion of the elect. Finally, others yet, who may—because of the vigor, cheerfulness, originality, or basic honesty of their natures—be quite immune to the linguistic system dominated by the use of "the patriarchy," can use the term as a casual piece of invective or as a way of putting those whose ideas are somewhat backward in their place.

Irony aside, however, it would be a mistake simply to deplore the use of the term. Each cultural period has its own complex and diverting absurdities, and its own fascinating morbidities. Where would we be without Dostoyevsky's *Notes From the Underground*, even though we have seen the malice it depicts bear a shiny and venomous fruit in the Gulag? Perhaps we need not rush into a dismissal of the cant words, but should watch their beautiful and grotesque exfoliations with a certain thankfulness that we live in an age of such wonders. But we need also to be prepared to deal with their more poisonous effects. ◈

Death of a White Pine

by Paul Ramsey

Water lessened.
Pine beetles reaped.
The vanished tree
Invades my sleep.

Narrative of Light

Light enters the moss
On the banks of the railroad,
And travels the railroad
To the horizon's distance
And the distant sky.

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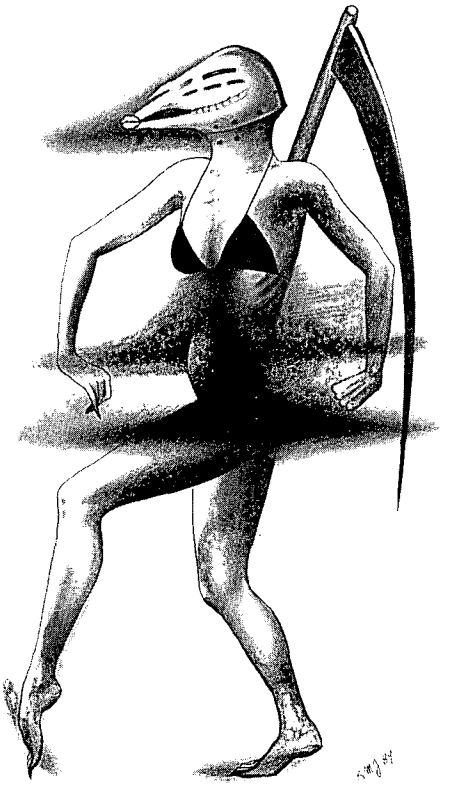
Dead Souls in the Classroom

by Bryce J. Christensen



"Thanatology" or "death education" now competes with driver's ed and "social problems" for the attention of the nation's high schoolers. First introduced on America's college campuses in the 1960's by such luminaries as Edgar Jackson, Richard Kalish, Robert Kastenbaum, and Herman Feifel, death education has, like many other dubious pedagogical experiments, trickled down to the secondary and even elementary schools. Some states now require instruction on "death and dying" as part of the health curriculum for the public schools.

But what do sophomores learn from their solicitous death instructors? Daniel Leviton, professor of health science at the University of Maryland and one of the founders of the discipline, has provided a revealing outline of the "goals for death education." First in his list of 12 objectives is the educator's task of "remov[ing] the taboo aspect of death language so students can read and discourse upon death rationally without becoming anxious." If nothing else, the jargon tells us that we have indeed wandered into a world of death, a region of credentialed corpses and academic putrefaction. It gets worse. Leviton declares that death educators "promote comfortable and intelligent interaction with the dying as human beings." Children are to learn the medical physiology of death so that they will "grow up with a minimum of death-related anxieties. Anxieties are too often based upon irrationality and myth rather than fact."

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Disabused of the mythology and taboos of the past, armed with a catalog of facts, students can "understand the dynamics of grief and the reactions of differing age groups to the death of a 'significant other.'" Through the power of modern science and sociology, the death educator will banish the horrors of the tomb and help students "work toward an easy dying." Of course, students won't achieve this "easy" exit from life without learning "the importance of pain reduction for the dying person." "Pain," after all, "is a priority issue for the dying." (*Priority issue*?)

But then, since neither morphine nor mortuaries come free, death ed will also "educate consumers to the commercial death market." In practice, this may mean visiting a funeral home to price the funeral packages. During a death-ed field trip, students may even be encouraged to try lying in one of the sample coffins.

With the dark myths of the past dispelled, the technical fortifications against pain reviewed, the dollars and cents added up, what's left for the busy death educator? Oh, there will always be one or two annoying kids in the back of the room with bothersome questions about the *meaning* of death. Leviton admits that "the death educator can provide no answer concerning status after death." Not to worry, death ed can serve Good Causes on Earth without worrying about Heaven or Hell. Take pacifism, for instance. The death educator can help students "recognize that war and other holocausts are related to feelings of personal immortality and omnipotence. War might be avoided if we realize

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that it may be ourselves or children who would be killed or mutilated as well as an amorphous 'enemy.'" The modern shibboleths of "pluralism" and "tolerance" will likewise find their way into the work of the socially-motivated death educator who helps students understand that "death means different things to different people" and that "style of dying is individualistic." In the death-ed pastiche of medical fact, pop psychology, and modernist cant, the final cliché is "different strokes for different folks."

So completely does the cult of individualism govern death ed that instructors are to "assist the individual in developing a personal eschatology by specifying the relationship between life and death." Except for the medical and financial facts, death ed offers no "right answers"—certainly not in funeral ritual or "personal eschatology." Death educators are to help students "catalyze and synthesize attitudes and thoughts concerning death in a more positive manner," but they cannot say which positive mental attitude is to be preferred while waiting for the undertaker. Just recite a few slogans borrowed from Dale Carnegie next time you pass the cemetery.

Short on specifiable content, death ed joins the list of classes ("Media," "Creative Writing," "Personal Relations") offering refuge to students fleeing the rigors of mathematics, Latin, or chemistry. Trouble is, though, that despite all the tax money devoted to it, despite the impressive credentials of its proponents, despite the slick packaging of its curricula, despite its popularity with progressive educators, death ed doesn't *work* very well, not even by its own standards. Reported surveys have shown that while death education may reduce anxiety about death among some, it actually exacerbates fear of death among others. Similarly, surveys show that death ed does not reduce the number of students prone to suicide. For death educators, such problems simply signal a need for "more research."

But let the entire federal budget be devoted to research in thanatology, and the grave will still refuse to yield up her secrets to the clean, well-lighted classroom. So long as it remains in thrall to scientific rationalism and modern sentimentality, death education will remain a noxious lie meant to flatter the Imperial Self. According to this lie, death poses no overwhelming threat to the individual ego, but instead becomes simply one more event to be managed and planned according to personal preferences and scientific measurement. Students are encouraged to think of death as one more *subject*, mastered by study and calculation, not as a humbling mystery that exposes the vanity of human ambitions. Seeking to explain human mortality, death educators end up explaining it away.

Then again, perhaps it is too much to expect any teacher in the public schools to resist rather than accede to the prevailing cultural attitudes toward death. In contemporary America and Europe, that prevailing attitude is denial. "Everything goes on," writes French historian Philippe Aries, "as if neither I nor those who are dear to me are any longer mortal. Technically, we might admit that we might die. . . . But really, at heart we feel we are non-mortals." Aries puts it emphatically: "In our day, in approximately a third of a century, we have witnessed a brutal revolution in traditional ideas and feelings, a revolution so brutal that social observers have not failed to be struck with it. It is really an absolutely unheard of phenomenon. Death, so omnipresent in the past that it was familiar, would be effaced, would disappear. It would become shameful and forbidden." "Death," Aries writes elsewhere, "has become a taboo, an unnameable thing . . . [I]n the 20th century, death has replaced sex as the principal prohibition."

Neither Hollywood murder movies nor death education invalidate Aries' observation. Indeed, by turning death into a histrionic spectacle on the one hand and an academic exercise on the other, moviemakers and pedagogues alike isolate death from everyday life. In the popular imagination, death has ceased to define the universal human condition and instead has become the professional specialty of actors, morticians, doctors, and now teachers.

Death has disappeared from the fabric of everyday life in part because it occurs less frequently now than in the past. Although life expectancy figures from earlier centuries can be misleading if the statistical effects of high infant mortality are forgotten, the numbers can still provide suggestive comparisons. Life expectancy in 1850 in Massachusetts stood at only 38 years for males and 41 for females. Even in 1900, national life expectancy stood at only 46 for males and 48 for females. Our grandparents' generation experienced death as a frequent intruder. At a time when many women died in childbirth, colonial and 19th-century Americans understood well the precarious balance between life and death. When epidemics and malnutrition were common, infants and children also lived in the constant shadow of death.

In this century, however, the American death rate has declined sharply. A white male born in 1983 is now expected to live 72 years, a white female 79 years. The annual mortality rate for the American population stood at only 9 deaths per 1,000 people compared to 21 per 1,000 in Massachusetts in 1865. The decline has been especially striking among women and children. As late as 1935, 6 mothers died in labor for every 1,000 births in New York City. In contrast, in 1983 only 8 American mothers died in childbirth for every 100,000 births. Among infants, the mortality rate has fallen from 141 per 1,000 in 1900-04 in Massachusetts to a nationwide figure of just 11 per 1,000 in 1983.

Even when grave illness does strike, modern medicine fosters persistent hope for a cure. "With the advancements in therapeutics and surgery," Aries notes, "it has become increasingly more difficult to be certain that a serious illness is fatal; the chances of recovering from it have increased so much. . . . [E]veryone acts as though medicine is the answer to everything. . . . Caesar must die one day, [but] there is absolutely no reason for oneself to die."

Growing reliance upon the life-prolonging powers of medicine has also changed the setting where death finally does occur. Until this century, Americans typically died at home, generally with family members (children included) gathered around the deathbed, often joined by a priest or clergyman. Family members washed and prepared the body for burial, kept vigil over the dead body, carried the coffin to the church, and quite often dug the grave. Now all of these tasks are performed, more efficiently, by professionals. The body is typically taken directly from the hospital to the

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funeral home to be seen by family members only when embalmed and cosmetically prepared for viewing.

The modern professionalization of death has not only distanced the family from the dead, but has also reduced the visibility of religion. In many cities, nine out of ten funerals are now conducted out of funeral homes, not chapels or synagogues. Buoyed up by technocratic confidence, modern men and women look to the future with scant regard for the lessons of history. Wyndham Lewis anticipated this development in his denunciation of "youngergeneration-consciousness" in 1932. Lewis found it dangerous that "'Youth' Propaganda" was teaching the young "to repudiate all ancient forms of cult or ritual in favor of progress and Modernity." In the same vein, George Orwell complained about 20th-century writers who were trying to create "a race of enlightened sunbathers, whose sole topic of conversation is their own superiority to their ancestors."

The affluence of the modern world also fosters the myth of immortality. Harry Armstrong remarks that "the general economic and social condition of a people has a considerable influence on their attitude toward death. The general rule is that the more affluent they become and the more creature comforts and satisfactions they enjoy, the more they fear and dread their ultimate fate." Greater affluence affects not only attitudes toward death but also emotional responses. Allan Kellehear of the University of New South Wales reports that "the higher the [social] class, the less emotion expressed for the deceased." In contrast, Aries finds among "the lower classes . . . death is still something real and serious. . . . In them, we recognize vestiges of the traditional death."

But why worry that only the poor must now acknowledge their mortality? Why not blithely enjoy our technical progress and affluence until the lights go out? The truth, always understood by poets and moralists, is that only by contemplating death can men recognize the boundaries and significance of life. Pondering death often has the paradoxical effect of turning men away from egotism. So literary critic Joseph Schwartz, paraphrasing the novelist Walker Percy, concludes: "The certainty of death is the very condition of recovering oneself."

Unsurprisingly, surveys find that death is least frightening to those with a sense of "extended self" that includes other people. Meditation on death can extend the self by reminding the living of debts to departed ancestors and of the obligation to make like sacrifices for the next generation. Richard Weaver accordingly stressed the importance of "belief in the continuum of (the human) race." "Those who have no concern for their ancestors," he reasoned, "will, by simple application of the same rule, have none for their descendants."

Arguably, the nation's "birth dearth" springs in part from the widespread denial of death. Immortals, after all, need not rear a successor generation. It is noteworthy that as the fertility of American Catholics—once known for their large families—has fallen to below replacement level, requests for memorial masses for the dead have also declined markedly. Death education of the modern sort not only does not reverse this breaking of the links between generations but actually accelerates it. For Professor Leviton, it is encouraging that after a death-ed class, students show "an increase in preference for an educator rather than parent to teach children about death."

Perhaps this generation can be shaken out of the illusion of immortality only by crisis, calamity, or war. But perhaps some can still be reached by the sober witness of faith. Such witness will not come from death education. Rather the task falls to those of us who profess faith in God, regardless of our career choice. In this task, we can hardly hope to inspire others to make a pilgrimage toward eternal life without pointing out that we are currently living in the shadow of death. Few can acknowledge that shadow without pain and distress. But in the end, it is far worse to deny that shadow by retreating into the neon illumination of modern culture. For, as T.S. Eliot understood: "Life you may evade, but Death you shall not."

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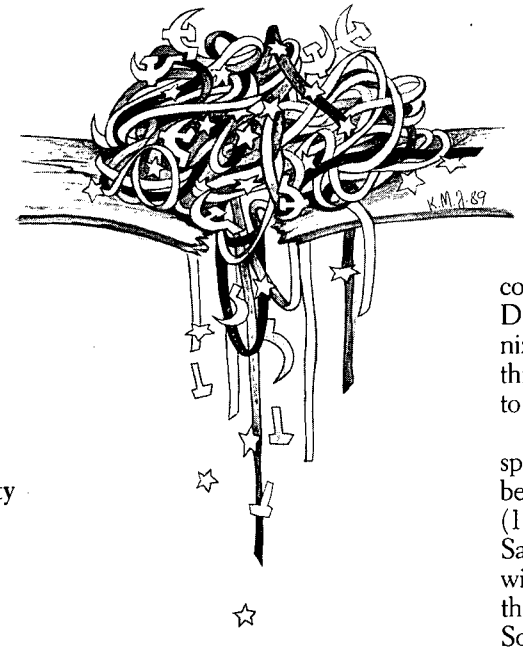
National Insecurity

by William R. Hawkins

"Diplomacy is utterly useless where there is no force behind it."
—Theodore Roosevelt



Inside the National Security Council
by Constantine C. Menges
New York: Simon & Schuster; 418 pp., $19.95

The Presidency and the Management of National Security
by Carnes Lord
New York: Free Press; 207 pp., $22.50

From the elevation of arms control to the opening of talks with the PLO, the course of American foreign policy in recent years has led some to wonder why Ronald Reagan was once considered such a contrast to Jimmy Carter. The cycle is best seen in Central America. In 1980, the question was whether El Salvador could survive a Communist insurgency. The Reagan Doctrine's support of the contras shifted the strategic balance. The question then became could Nicaragua survive an anticommunist insurgency. But these days, leftist demonstrators once again chant, "Nicaragua is now free. El Salvador soon will be." Soviet aid flows to the Sandinistas (and on to guerrillas, terrorists, and drug runners throughout the region), while the contras starve.

Reagan's defenders blame the Democratic Congress. The Boland amendments and Speaker Wright's plots with the Sandinistas come readily to mind. Yet the most powerful enemies of President Reagan's policies were within the executive branch at the Department of State. Reagan tolerated George Schultz as secretary of state, a man who in championing the appeasement policies of the Foreign Service worked tirelessly to subvert the President's policies—and in the last two years, succeeded.

This is the message of Constantine Menges and Carnes Lord. Both men served on the National Security Council staff (Menges, 1983-86; Lord, 1981-83). The NSC is supposed to keep the President in control of foreign policy. However, in the struggle between the NSC and the State Department, the NSC is short of resources unless the President stays involved in the process and imparts to the NSC his authority to deal with the bureaucracy. Reagan did not do this. Given the record of George Bush and James Baker during this period, matters are unlikely to improve.

The Menges and Lord books are complementary. Menges relates with details that make the blood boil the constant intrigues hatched by the State Department, while Lord does an organizational analysis, proposing reforms throughout the foreign policy apparatus to increase presidential authority.

Menges had senior NSC staff responsibility for Latin America. He had been a Latin America CIA specialist (1981-83). He firmly believes that if the Sandinistas are not removed, Mexico will eventually fall and the US will face the unaccustomed danger of a large, Soviet-armed enemy on its own border.

Menges recounts seven major attempts between 1981 and 1986 by State to substitute its own program for Reagan's. State wanted a negotiated settlement that would ratify Communist control of Nicaragua and provide US economic aid in exchange for a Sandinista promise not to pursue revolutionary activity elsewhere. State opposed any attempt to remove the Sandinista regime or require it to adopt democracy as being contrary to this formula. Of course, without pressure there was no reason for the Sandinistas to make concessions.

That the State formula was contrary to Reagan's program was revealed whenever the President discovered what State was doing. The President always said "no" (often displaying considerable anger), ordered State plans halted, and sent personal assurances to friendly Central American governments. Yet he left the conspirators in place to try again, and they quickly learned to operate behind the President's back—and to block all attempts to inform the

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President what was happening. This is the most shocking part of the story.

A few of the many examples: in early 1983, when Jeane Kirkpatrick made a tour of Central America with a letter from Reagan outlining his policy, Thomas Enders, assistant secretary of state for Latin America, sent a letter to all area ambassadors to ignore Kirkpatrick because a new policy, the State formula, was about to be adopted. In 1985, Schultz tried to persuade all Latin American ambassadors appointed by Reagan to resign, so that they could be replaced by career Foreign Service officers chosen by himself. Ambassadors involved had to resort to notes passed through Ed Meese and commercial telegrams to get word to Reagan. Repeatedly, State officials would hold secret talks with the Sandinistas and draw up complete peace treaties without ever showing the documents to the President. Even when these efforts were blocked, word would spread around the region, breeding fear of an impending sell-out. Without American leadership and support, no one can be expected to risk a confrontation with the Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan axis.

Robert McFarlane, as head of the NSC, was co-opted by Schultz to block formal NSC interference. Messages from ambassadors, the NSC staff, Republican congressmen, Defense Secretary Weinberger, and even the heads of foreign governments were lost or delayed if sent by normal bureaucratic channels. Michael Deaver, who wanted to build a new Reagan image as a "man of peace," also worked with Schultz to advance State proposals. And whenever the Sandinistas provoked an outcry on Capitol Hill by invading Honduras or crushing dissent, a cabal swung into action to delay any votes on contra aid until the crisis had passed. State officials would trot out a new "peace process" development that the Democrats would use as an excuse for doing nothing. Eventually, Kirkpatrick, Weinberger, Bill Casey at CIA, and even Menges left government. The NSC was "disgraced" by the Iran-contra affair. Meanwhile, Schultz and the State careerists plodded on, finally gaining victory with the 1987 Arias Plan that sold out the contras for empty promises and a Nobel Prize.

Though Menges concentrates on Central America, he also observes how State worked for similar negotiated settlements of other issues: a desire to trade SDI for limits on Soviet offensive weapons; a cutoff in aid to anticommunist forces in Angola and Afghanistan for promises of future Cuban and Soviet withdrawals but continuing Communist regimes (both plans advanced in the settlements rushed through in 1988); the constant attempts to buy Soviet goodwill through expanded trade financed on credit.

Menges calls this last point the "shallow economic determinism" shared by the departments of State and Commerce. Menges does not pursue this point as far as he should. It is a powerful ploy for co-opting otherwise "conservative" businessmen and intellectuals. The conservative movement has relied so much on classical liberal rhetoric in its defense of capitalism that it no longer gives due regard to the larger context of this philosophy. Thus the State Department had no problem embracing and promoting Reagan's "free trade" policy, as it is based on the same liberal view of a world of peace and harmony, and denies that other nations might be trying to gain an advantage.

Menges argues that the State Department, though wrong, thinks it is doing the right thing, and Lord speaks of a difference in "culture" at State, but neither explores the philosophical roots of the problem. State's house creed is liberalism. The often cited difference between "classical" and "modern" liberalism is irrelevant here, because continuity exists in liberal thought on international relations stretching back to the Enlightenment. The basic notion is that peace is the norm, conflict an aberration. The purpose of diplomacy is not to advance national interests, but only to clear up misunderstandings before they get out of hand (as Stanley Hoffman posed it, "world order" should be chosen over American "primacy"). It is thus important never to overreact (or even react at all). An occasional corrupt or insane ruler may cause problems, but there are no basic or permanent causes for animosity between peoples. All conflicts of interest can be settled by compromise. Reason will out. The idea that ambition or ideology can pit entire civilizations against each other in an ongoing struggle is totally unacceptable.

What else explains the airy belief that "talks" will bring peace between Israel and the PLO? What is there to talk about except a "Palestinian state" that would pose a mortal threat to Israel? That Schultz's "land for peace" formu-

LIBERAL ARTS

ON DEATH

Death meets us everywhere, and is procured by every instrument, and in all chances, and enters in at many doors; by violence and secret influence; by the aspect of a star and the stink of a mist; by the emissions of a cloud and the meeting of a vapour; by the fall of a chariot and the stumbling at a stone; by a full meal or an empty stomach; by watching at the wine or by watching at prayers; by the sun or the moon; by a heat or a cold; by sleepless nights or sleeping days; by water frozen into the hardness and sharpness of a dagger; or water thawed into the floods of a river; by a hair or a raisin; by violent motion or sitting still; by severity or dissolution; by God's mercy or God's anger; by everything in providence and everything in manners; by everything in nature and everything in chance. *Eripitur persona, manet res*; we take pains to heap up things useful to our life, and get our death in the purchase; and the person is snatched away, and the goods remain. And all this is the law and constitution of nature; it is a punishment to our sins, the unalterable event of Providence, and the decree of Heaven. The chains that confine us to this condition are strong as destiny, and immutable as the eternal laws of God.

I have conversed with some men who rejoiced in the death or calamity of others, and accounted it as a judgment upon them for being on the other side, and against them in the contention; but within the revolution of a few months the same man met with a more uneasy and unhandsome death; which when I saw, I wept, and was afraid; for I knew that it must be so with all men; for we also shall die, and end our quarrels and contentions by passing to a final sentence.

—*from* Holy Dying *by Jeremy Taylor*

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la looked ominously like the 1938 Munich solution for Czechoslovakia is not surprising, since a primary characteristic of the liberal world view is the endless repetition of errors. This is because each issue is seen as a discreet problem to be settled. If just this one thing can be put behind us, they say, then normal relations (peace) will be restored. They refuse to consider that in regard to some regimes and movements, the only realistic definition of normal relations is unrelenting war. It is this liberal attitude that has made the "salami tactic" so popular with adversaries.

It is also the attitude that makes the development of strategy so difficult in the United States. By definition, strategy is the long-range formulation of plans. It thus assumes long-term conflicts or at least a series of challenges to which the nation must respond. The fundamental world view of the strategist is at odds with the liberal philosophy. For the liberal, the development of a US strategy to enhance its position in the world is immoral, while to believe that the US has any enemies with their own strategies is to succumb to right-wing paranoia. But the strategist must operate on the belief that the world is as it has always been, marked by nations and empires striving to control their surroundings so as to increase their wealth and power. This is why the staffs of the NSC, CIA, and Defense Department, which are continuously engaged in this global struggle, found themselves allied against the State Department. It was not just bureaucratic turf, but basic views about how the world works that were at odds.

This is also why Carnes Lord's plans for converting the NSC into a true strategic planning agency will arouse instant opposition. The lack of an integrated planning agency has symbolized America's unwillingness to accept international conflict as a norm. A stronger NSC may be attacked by liberals as the onset of "Prussianism," but once their underlying philosophy is rejected, so can be their criticism.

Lord would reduce State to an operational role, simply carrying out the strategy determined by the NSC in accordance with presidential wishes (just as Defense would do with military matters). Within the NSC framework, State is only one voice among many contending with Defense, CIA, the JCS, and the NSC staff (the NSC advisor would be elevated to cabinet rank). Rather than a mere coordinating group, the NSC would exercise real authority over the operational bureaucracy to ensure that the President's strategic decisions were being followed.

Lord would also reorganize the top positions at State to better conform to posts at Defense, the military theater commands, and alliance networks. Lord would also create new posts across the bureaucracy to work on political-military issues, particularly sub-conventional warfare (terrorism and insurgency). And ambassadors would play a larger role as presidential agents.

One of Lord's best ideas was mentioned only in passing: the creation of a new high-level civil service separate from the Foreign Service, one that would cut across the entire foreign policy-defense-intelligence establishment. A gap should be created between the State Department careerists and policymaking positions, a gap that could only be crossed by those who had acquired wider experience. The Foreign Service careerists claim that they are the "professionals," whereas political appointees are amateurs. While the careerists may possess a great deal of factual knowledge, this is not the same as the imagination needed by strategists. Nor is the environment at State likely to generate such imagination. There are a great many more people whose experience in government, business, the military, and academic and private research better suits them for strategic policymaking.

While conservatives have mistrusted the State Department since Yalta, Lord notes that "conservatism remains profoundly ambivalent concerning the presidency." But with the GOP winning five of six presidential elections since 1968, and the electoral vote balance continuing to shift in its favor, a stronger Chief Executive is the best hope for national renewal. Clearly the White House needs strengthening, as it has not been able to act decisively in recent years to prevent the erosion of America's position in the world.

The Founding Fathers created the presidency because Congress had shown itself unable to handle foreign affairs. The President was to be "energetic" and exhibit "decision, activity, secrecy and dispatch," according to Alexander Hamilton. But to prevail over Congress, the President must first get his own executive branch in order. For that he needs "hands on" involvement. An NSC that can develop plans, monitor bureaucratic performance, and discipline noncompliance would be a powerful asset. This means that conservatives are going to have to think more seriously about the structure and use of centralized governmental authority than they have done in the past.

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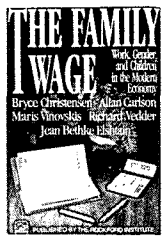

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The Lessons of Grenada

by Timothy Ashby

"To conquer tumult, nature's sodin force, War . . . was first devis'd."
—Sir William D'Avenant

Red Calypso
by Geoffrey Wagner
Chicago and Washington, DC:
Regnery Gateway; 264 pp., $12.95

◆

Grenada's Communist interlude has become the subject of an intense postmortem by scholars of varying ideological hues. Historically, the small island is destined to be a symbol of the Reagan years. However much the US intervention of October 25, 1983 is vilified by the left, objective observers will remember it as the only successful manifestation of the Reagan administration's policy towards Latin America and the Caribbean. Whatever your perspective on the "Grenada Rescue Mission," there can be no doubt that the vast majority of the island's inhabitants felt that the United States had truly liberated them from a Marxist-Leninist tyranny. A pluralistic political system, regardless of its many foibles, is today thriving in Grenada. Grenada represents the only proven demonstration of the Reagan Doctrine—rolling back communism through force of arms. Admittedly, the arms in this case were carried by American soldiers and not indigenous "freedom fighters," but the policy was the same.

Timothy Ashby is director of the Office of Mexico and the Caribbean Basin at the Commerce Department.

Grenada offers other lessons, though. The "Revo" of March 13, 1979 that brought to power the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) was a classic case of a communist *coup d'etat*. In fact, the takeover was staged in such a textbook fashion that a Soviet cruise ship was anchored off the Grenadian capital of St. George's throughout the single day it took to render the island safe for socialism, giving the KGB operatives aboard a grandstand seat to this Marxist revolution with a Caribbean beat.

Cuba played the role of subversive vanguard for this revolution, establishing strong ties with Maurice Bishop and Bernard Coard's New Jewel Movement (NJM) years before the 1979 coup. Cuban commandoes supported the NJM in its ridiculously easy hijacking of the island and its government, and Fidel Castro quickly sent hundreds of military trainers, technicians, and intelligence agents to Grenada in the "Revo's" aftermath.

Castro obviously attached great importance to his relations with Grenada. His friendship with Maurice Bishop, the PRG's prime minister, was genuine, and stemmed in large measure from Bishop's unabashed hero-worship of Cuba's *maximo lider*. The man sent as Havana's ambassador to Grenada was Julian Torres Rizo, a senior intelligence officer from the Cuban Communist Party's own intelligence arm, the *Departmento America*. After being booted out of Grenada by the US 82nd Airborne Division, Torres Rizo returned to a hero's welcome in Havana and subsequent promotion to be an alternate member of the Cuban Communist Party's Politburo. Such a fate was not shared by Colonel Pedro Tortolo Comas, the Soviet-trained officer sent to defend the island against Yankee imperialist aggression: the hapless colonel was broken to private and shipped to Angola.

Moscow's relations with Grenada were deliberately kept low-key for the first two years following the coup. No Soviet subversion or covert political maneuvering was necessary to win influence with the PRG, for the Grenadians actively wooed the Russians, pressuring Cuba to champion Grenada's "cause" with the Kremlin while seeking to enhance Grenada's "importance in the Soviet scheme of things." For their part, the Russians seemed wary of provoking a US backlash, counseling the PRG to present a moderate face to the world, and telling

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them that the USSR's assistance "must never be provocative." This did not preclude the signing of several secret military and technical assistance treaties between the two great socialist nations.

Only later, as Moscow concluded that Washington's reaction to the Cubanization of Grenada would not go beyond rhetoric, did the Soviet presence increase. Ambassador Gennadiy Sazhenev—a former officer in the USSR's long-range bomber forces who reportedly served subsequently in South America as an agent of the GRU (Soviet Military Intelligence)—arrived in Grenada with two Mercedes and a staff of 20 to establish an embassy in an expropriated hotel boasting one of the best views on the island.

The tons of PRG records discovered on the island after its liberation amply demonstrate that the USSR had big plans for little Grenada. The Kremlin was in the process of giving the PRG at least one and possibly as many as five military aircraft, and had offered to train young Grenadians as pilots in the Soviet Union. Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, the Soviet Army's chief of staff, told the PRG's ambassador to Moscow that Russian specialists were being sent to Grenada "to conduct studies related to the construction of military projects." These probably included the notorious Point Salines airport, a "seaport" planned for the island's east coast, an Intersputnik satellite station, and a naval facility on the dependency island of Carriacou. A contingent of Russian teachers and their families arrived in Grenada only weeks before the US intervention; the Soviet news agency TASS had opened an office in Prime Minister Maurice Bishop's heavily-guarded office complex (another expropriated hotel), and young Grenadians—children of the NJM party elite—were attending the Lenin School in Moscow.

It is interesting for students of imperialism to speculate how far the Soviet influence in Grenada would have extended had it not been nipped in the bud by Ronald Reagan. For keen observers such as Geoffrey Wagner—who had chosen to settle on Grenada when it had been a sleepy little British colony only a few years earlier—it seemed barely credible to witness teenaged members of the Grenada-Soviet Friendship Society giving clench-fisted salutes while chanting: "Long live the Soviet Union! Long live Proletarian Internationalism!"

Red Calypso stands out from other books on Grenada's revolution because its author, Geoffrey Wagner, actually lived on the island throughout the PRG's reign, and for many years before the 1979 *coup d'etat*. Unlike the dozen or so other writers who have analyzed the "Revo," Wagner was an eyewitness to Grenada's Cubanization. Not only has Geoffrey Wagner analyzed history, he has lived it. Soldier, scholar, and poet, he has seen the decline of the British Raj and the expansion of the Soviet empire, has conversed with Cuban intelligence officers in Grenada and guarded Nazi Deputy Führer Rudolf Hess while serving as a subaltern in the British Army. As such, Wagner brings a unique verve and unusual detail to his study of the Grenadian Revolution.

His honesty is refreshing, especially after the roseate depictions of Maurice Bishop and the PRG by leftists in the US and Europe, and their jaundiced accounts of the American intervention. The Western left saw Bishop's Grenada as a brave new experiment in socialism. Geoffrey Wagner shows it for what it really was—a sordid attempt by a collection of Stalinist thugs and incompetent Marxist ideologues to recreate what Maurice Bishop called "the land of Lenin" on a 120-square-mile piece of Caribbean real estate.

Geoffrey Wagner's sense of irony surfaces throughout *Red Calypso*, especially in his accounts of the PRG's eccentricities. As one who has also written extensively on Grenada's history, I found particularly poignant his discussion of Maurice Bishop's hero-worship of an 18th-century French-Grenadian revolutionary named Julian Fedon, who is best remembered for his cold-blooded murder of 50 British hostages, including the island's governor. Bishop named one of his People's Revolutionary Army (PRA) camps in Fedon's honor, and it was here that his body, along with the bodies of more than 50 other people massacred by the PRA, was taken to be burned.

Red Calypso is unique in its account of the 1983 US intervention and its aftermath. Wagner corrects the faulty media accounts of the time, displaying an impressive understanding of US military tactics and hardware. He had a grandstand seat for much of the revolution's most important events, for his island home was directly across the road from the Pointe Salines airport and the large Cuban camp surrounding it. As a result, Wagner found himself in the middle of the US 82nd Airborne Division's encampment after the "Rescue Mission," a factor which gave him access to stories and personalities unavailable to *any* other journalist or writer.

Regardless of the revolutionary mayhem documented so painstakingly in *Red Calypso*, the book's most disturbing chapter is one aptly titled "Through a Glass Darkly: The Press in Grenada." Having also resided in Grenada during the PRG's reign, and having visited there afterwards, I have never ceased to be astonished at the Western media's treatment of the Grenada drama as an unprovoked aggression against a peaceful Caribbean island of no strategic importance. The impression given was that the ordinary people of Grenada resented and resisted the intervention. In reality, an astonishing 97 percent of Grenadians polled believed that they had truly been "rescued" by "Papa Reagan," while demonstrations were staged to protest the *departure* of US forces. A petition signed by 17,000 Grenadians (out of a total population of 89,000) was presented to the US Embassy, asking that Grenada be annexed by the United States. An estimated *half* of the island's entire population came to hear President Reagan's speech during his 1984 visit to Grenada.

Even as Grenada recedes into American history with the passing of the Reagan administration, the "Revo" and its aftermath will never be forgotten by the people of Grenada. In the same way that elderly pensioners in France and Belgium preserve fond memories of the American boys who "rescued" them from Nazi tyranny, Geoffrey Wagner and his friends and neighbors on Grenada know why the power of the US is a force for good in the world. This is the true lesson of Grenada. ◁

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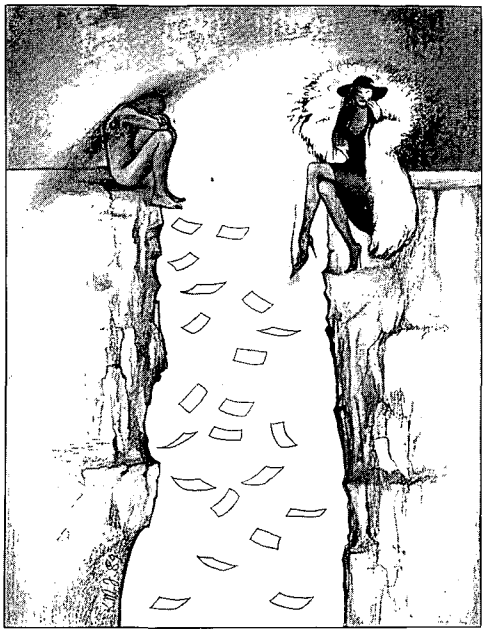
Old Possum in his Letters

by James W. Tuttleton

"Talent is an adornment; an adornment is also a concealment."
—Nietzsche



The Letters of T.S. Eliot: Volume I, 1898-1922
edited by Valerie Eliot
San Diego, New York, London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; 639 pp., $29.95

◆

"I think one's letters ought to be about oneself (I live up to this theory!)—what else is there to talk about? Letters should be indiscretions—otherwise they are simply official bulletins." So T.S. Eliot remarked to his Harvard classmate, the poet Conrad Aiken, in 1914. Most readers of Eliot's work have expected official bulletins, but others have long awaited the letters as proof of his indiscretions. The publication of Eliot's correspondence by his widow Valerie, an edition so long awaited by the poet's friends and detractors, is therefore a literary event of the greatest biographical importance. The first of several such volumes to follow, this book takes the poet from his boyhood up to 1922, the year of the publication of *The Waste Land*. Hence, it is now possible to begin to answer whether Eliot indeed lived up to his theory. In these 618 pages of early correspondence—including some letters *to* or *about* Eliot by friends and family—we have a rich compendium of materials, indiscreet and official, touching the poet's life and work.

Surprises of a sort do pepper these pages, as when young Eliot tells Aiken that "I should find it very stimulating to have several women fall in love with me," and "I should be very sorry for them, too." "Come," he adjures Aiken (though neither was married), "let us desert our wives and fly to a land where there are no Medici prints, nothing but concubinage and conversation." He confesses to recurrent "nervous sexual attacks which I suffer from when alone in a city" and opines that he would have been better off "if I had disposed of my virginity and shyness several years ago." Ford Madox Ford he dismisses as "an unpleasant parasite of letters." But was this young Eliot cocky or prescient when he remarked of Bertrand Russell, his philosophy tutor at Harvard, that "he has a sensitive, but hardly a cultivated mind, and I begin to realise how unbalanced he is," or when he called Ezra Pound's early verse "well-meaning but touchingly incompetent"? However one may answer, it is worth remarking that he often revised his judgment of himself and others.

But on the whole these early letters are models of circumspection befitting a young man of a proper New England sensibility. With his mother we find young Tom exceptionally tender; with his father he is respectfully defensive about his vocation; with his Harvard philosophy professors he is exacting and serious; while with classmates and Cambridge women friends he is jaunty and comedic. Eliot before 1914 seems a confident and happy young man. But with the onset of the war, with his disastrous marriage to the chronically ill Vivienne Haigh-Wood in 1915, and with his desperate effort to make ends meet, Eliot's spirits manifestly decline, year by year, toward the nervous breakdown that felled him in 1922.

It is during this period that Eliot mounted what can only be called, after

James W. Tuttleton is an associate dean at New York University.

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Henry James, the conquest of London. Eliot intended nothing less than to make himself the preeminent authority, in England, on literature, philosophy, and culture. The process by which he mastered Anglo-American literary politics is fascinating. It involved his immersion in the literary tradition and modern cultural developments. He undertook a calculated program of reading, he gave lectures in a university extension program, he cultivated British and American writers and journal editors, and he composed an intentionally small body of influential poems and stunning works of contemporary criticism like *The Sacred Wood*. These, together with his management of issues for the *Egoist* and his taking on the editorship of *Criterion*, disclose a young man astutely at work in the creation of an extraordinary literary career. As he told his mother in 1919:

> There is a small and select public which regards me as the best living critic, as well as the best living poet, in England. I shall of course write for the *Ath[eneum]*., and keep my finger on it. I am much in sympathy with the editor, who is one of my most cordial admirers. With that and the *Egoist* and a young quarterly review which I am interested in, and which is glad to take anything I will give, I can have more than enough power to satisfy me. I really think that I have far more *influence* on English letters than any other American has ever had, unless it be Henry James. I know a great many people, but there are many more who would like to know me, and I can remain isolated and detached.

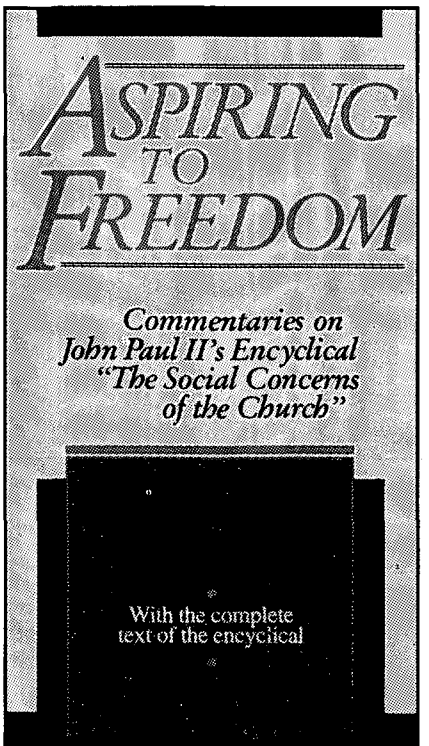
Yet Eliot's conquest of London could not have been accomplished without the help of a good many people. And what seems evident from these letters is that Eliot, pampered as a boy, projected the persona of one who very much needed to be taken care of.

One may infer an image of Eliot's dependency in the letter of his mother, dated 1905, to the headmaster of the Milton Academy: "I thought perhaps I had better explain to you just why Tom could not participate in football and other such strenuous sports, involving risk of strain. He has had a case of congenital rupture which, our physician thinks, is *superficially* healed, but as the abdominal muscles there are weak. . . ." Later, he persuaded the family to support him, even after he had become a married man. During his catastrophic marriage to Vivienne, although he unarguably worked like a slave to support them (and the physicians who treated her), he induced Vivienne to correspond with many of their acquaintances, explaining why Tom was physically or emotionally unable to do this or that. Meanwhile, he was enormously productive in the life of letters.

Convinced as he was of what he called the "barbarism" of American life, Eliot apparently induced Ezra Pound to write to Henry Ware Eliot, the poet's father, to explain why his son's decision to remain in London as a writer was the only rational choice. Pound's quotation is from George Moore's *Confessions of a Young Man*:

> As to his coming to London, anything else is a waste of time and energy. No one in London cares a hang what is written in America. After getting an American audience a man has to begin all over again here if he plans an international hearing. . . . The situation has been very well summed up in the sentence: "Henry James stayed in Paris and read Turgenev and Flaubert, Mr. Howells returned to America and read Henry James."

When Vivienne broke down, it was Bertie Russell whom Eliot pressed into service, to take her down to his place in the country for rest and recuperation. We have long known that Pound put together the *Catholic Anthology* for the simple purpose of getting 15 pages of Eliot into print at once, and that he organized a public subscription to get Eliot out of the Lloyd's bank, where he had taken a job, so that the poet could devote himself wholly to letters. As Vivienne put it in a letter to the poet's brother, "Tom is *wonderful*. I have never met a man who gets so much pushing and helping and who impresses people so much with the feeling that he is worth helping." Charles W.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Eliot, the retired president of Harvard and a cousin of Eliot's grandfather, wasn't convinced by Eliot's expatriation. As he told Tom in a letter of 1919: "My last word is that if you wish to speak through your own work to people of the 'finest New England spirit' you had better not live much longer in the English atmosphere. The New England spirit has been nurtured in the American atmosphere." Nevertheless, as these letters make plain, the craft and cunning of Eliot's siege of London manifestly involved an appearance on his part of helplessness and an appeal to the goodwill of others. I do not mean to suggest that Eliot was ungrateful: these letters are replete with expressions of sincere gratitude. It is simply that the affairs of genius were, in his case, as in many others, managed by an apparent affectation of helplessness, one of Old Possum's many masks.

In the meantime, as Eliot becomes more and more immersed in his banking and literary duties, the letters become less indiscreet and revelatory, and more impersonal, more concerned with literary business. If, in 1917, he confided to Eleanor Hinkley that he sometimes thought "it is better to write brief letters—unless one had one particular thing to say at some length; one sits down to write a 'good long letter' and becomes consciously dull," by 1922 he was confessing to his brother that "I have not had the leisure to write a satisfactory and personal letter for years, and it is a recreation at which I am painfully out of practice." There is in all of this, however, something calculated, an element of self-protection, based on Eliot's recognition of his growing eminence and his aversion to biographical disclosures, evident in his notorious claims for the necessary impersonality of poetry.

Even so, a good many of the letters are richly interesting compendia of literary observations, amounting to *obiter dicta*. To Eleanor Hinkley, he remarks that "Every novelist has a knack for doing some one stunt":

> Thackeray could do the *Yellowplush Papers* and the Steyne part of *Vanity Fair*, but he had a picture of himself as a kindly satirist. Not at all, he hadn't brains enough, nor courage enough to find out really what he could do well, which was high society sordidness, and do it. Standards of good writing in English are deplorably low. Meredith knew what he was doing, but unfortunately it wasn't worth doing, don't read him. *The Way of All Flesh* was written by a man who was not an artist and had no sense of style.

On the other hand, Henry James "has about the keenest sense of Situation of any novelist, and his always alert intelligence is a perpetual delight," while George Eliot "had a great talent, and wrote one great story, *Amos Barton*, and went steadily down hill afterwards." Joyce and Marianne Moore Eliot read with pleasure, but of H.D.'s verse he observed that it is "fatiguingly monotonous and lacking in the element of surprise." In addition, he found in H.D. "a neurotic carnality which I dislike." ("I imagine you dislike equally the Prudentialism of myself and Mr. Joyce," he told Richard Aldington unexpectedly, "and expect you to abhor the poem [*The Waste Land*] on which I have been working.") His editorial dealings with women writers, or women generally, were problematic. As he told his father, "I struggle to keep the writing as much as possible in Male hands, as I distrust the Feminine in literature, and also, once a woman has had anything printed in your paper, it is very difficult to make her see why you should not print everything she sends in."

The Feminine in marriage was an even greater ordeal. "You said once that marriage is the greatest test in the world," he wrote Mrs. Jack Gardner in 1915, the year of his marriage. "I know now that you were right, but now I welcome the test instead of dreading it. It is much more than a test of sweetness of temper, as people sometimes think; it is a test of the whole character and affects every action." After a year of marriage Eliot confided to Aiken that "I have *lived* through material for a score of long poems, in the last six months." These letters intimate the most exciting test of Eliot's character as the couple struggled with poverty and illness of every conceivable kind, most conspicuously Vivienne's gradual descent into madness. *The Waste Land* portrait of the neurotic wife whose "nerves are bad tonight," who hallucinates wildly, and who implores her silent husband to speak to her, speak, speak about anything, opens up a vision of what the Eliots were going through in the years between 1915 and 1922. However, in that latter year it was he who completely broke down and required psychiatric treatment in a Swiss sanitarium, in what the poem called that "decayed hole among the mountains." There the poetic voice expresses the deepest sense of personal and spiritual exile.

Peter Ackroyd, Eliot's biographer, Michael Hastings, author of the play *Tom and Viv*, and the critic Donald Davie have charged that Eliot letters, unflattering to the poet, have been excluded from this collection prepared by the second Mrs. Eliot, and that it is "a whitewash job." Such charges require greater substantiation than I have so far seen. Until there is more evidence that these letters are merely "official bulletins," I am inclined to think the claim exaggerated. From 1917 onward, Old Possum was not much inclined to commit himself, in indiscreet ways, on letter paper. Meanwhile, we await succeeding volumes. ©

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Tell Them What They Want to Hear

by Kenneth McDonald

Peace With Freedom
by Maurice Tugwell
Toronto: Key Porter Books; 249 pp., $24.95

◆

Unremarked by commentators on Canada's federal election last November was the performance of candidates for the Communist Party of Canada. To qualify for national status, a party must field candidates in 50 ridings, which the CPC manages to do despite a singular lack of voter support. Out of some 13 million votes cast, the CPC garnered 6,782, its average of 135 ranging from a high of 310 in a Montreal riding to a low of 54 in Vancouver South. Yet the party's influence is undeniable.

Solitary amidst the mass of partisan pleas to embrace or shun freer trade with the United States during the election campaign was a five-column-wide advertisement bearing the headline "Wouldn't you like to hand this down to your kids?" Below it, and held between a thumb and forefinger, was a tiny replica of the Earth; home, readers were reminded, to 60,000 nuclear warheads. Instead of providing a world that kids could grow up in, Canadians were said to be "spending billions of dollars on aggressive military hardware. Money that could be spent insuring that children get adequate childcare, or building affordable homes, or feeding the hungry people lined up at foodbanks from Victoria to St. John's."

Electors were urged to "vote Canada out of the arms race" and to sign the Canadian Peace Pledge that would "make Canada a nuclear weapons free zone and make Canada an international voice for peace." The Canadian Peace Pledge Campaign, one learned, was sponsored by 180 organizations from coast to coast and facilitated by the Canadian Peace Alliance, for which the election was the stage. Wherever Prime Minister Brian Mulroney appeared he was beset by hecklers linking free trade to loss of Canada's sovereignty and entanglement in US militarism.

To both players and plot in this enduring item of Canadian theater Maurice Tugwell's *Peace With Freedom* now supplies a guide. The author has considerable qualifications: British army service in Europe, India, Palestine, Malaya, Cyprus, Bahrain, Iran, and Northern Ireland (where he initiated the function of countering propaganda); and a doctorate from King's College, London, for his thesis on revolutionary propaganda and possible countermeasures. After some years as director of the University of New Brunswick's Centre for Conflict Studies, he formed and is now the director of Toronto's Mackenzie Institute for the Study of Terrorism, Revolution and Propaganda.

Tugwell notes that "The Canadian peace movement consists of three main components: the churches; the broad mainstream, including various radical groups that are not directly or indirectly allied to Moscow; and the Communists and close allies who are." Separately and together, they exert unrelenting influence upon academics and schoolteachers, politicians and mandarins, artists, clerics, journalists, retired generals, and union leaders who constitute Canada's New Class.

Baldly stated, Canada's "peace" movement makes two assertions: that nuclear weapons threaten the peace, and that the Soviet Union doesn't. Consequently, it is the NATO countries, through their expressed intention to use nuclear weapons if attacked, that endanger the peace and even the Earth's survival. Ignored is the inconvenient Soviet record of unparalleled domestic massacres and external aggression. The forty-three-year-long forced occupation of Eastern Europe, the calculated savagery and genocide in Afghanistan, the continuing support of armed conflict in Africa, Central America, and the Far East—all this is ignored. So is the Soviet Union's massive, and still continuing, accumulation of land, air, and sea forces far beyond any possible "defensive" justification.

Indeed, in the period of Mikhail Gorbachev's "new political thinking," the Soviet embassy in Ottawa put out propaganda claiming that "the Soviet troops in Afghanistan are defending peace, justice, freedom, and a life worthy of human beings." The author observes: "Not one demonstration against these barbarities has been mounted by the Canadian churches or the peace movement, in remarkable contrast to their reactions to the Vietnamese war."

In all this, the movement is faithful to the advice that Lenin gave Felix Dzerzhinsky, creator of the Soviet secret police. When Dzerzhinsky asked how he should approach his target audience in the West, Lenin said: "Tell them what they want to hear." What the Canadian peace movement doesn't want its audience to hear is that the nuclear deterrent has kept the peace in Europe since 1945, and that the obvious result of abandoning it would be to expose NATO to the overwhelming "conventional" forces of the Soviet Union and its captive states. Marshal of the Soviet Union N.V. Ogarkov has argued for years that a war in Europe could be won and won quickly without nuclear weapons, provided the West did not resort to their use. Moreover, Soviet senior staff exercises show their divisions advancing westward: a "defensive" battle is one started by them and fought entirely on NATO territory.

Doggedly, the peace movement urges Canadians to opt out of alliances and any defense or resistance to the imagined Soviet threat by seeking "neutrality" and by abandoning the concept of peace with freedom as being altogether too dangerous. "The only Western equipment acceptable to the peace movements," the author comments, "is a white flag. This may seem a drastic oversimplification, but it is only by pursuing the internal logic of the movement to its end that its ab-

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surdity or its real operational intent can be understood. . . . The peace ideology supplies answers to all questions, and it gives them within a framework devoid of visible foreign influence. It is, apparently, a homespun, good, clean Canadian connection."

That perception, more than any other feature, distinguishes the ideology of the Canadian peace movement as a masterpiece of Soviet propaganda and deception. "Backed by the power of the Soviet propaganda apparatus, but nevertheless operating inside Canada from a minority position, the Communist element has succeeded in shaping an ideology that has no apparent connection with communism or the USSR, but which actually serves Soviet policy in every respect."

Last year's election gave some indication of the movement's effect on the political process. Despite the CPC's dismal showing at the polls, both the Liberal Party and the officially socialist New Democratic Party opposed the Mulroney government's planned purchase of nuclear-powered submarines. Both opposed the testing in Canada of US unarmed cruise missiles, while the NDP would have pulled Canadian forces out of Europe and declared Canada a nuclear-weapons-free zone. The return of Prime Minister Mulroney reconfirmed Canada's commitment to the defense of freedom, but there remains a significant body of opinion that would persuade Canadians otherwise.

If Tugwell's book is read as widely as it deserves to be, it will do much to correct the imbalance. Nor is its application confined to Canada. In the lexicon of Leninist dogma, peace is what follows the final victory of communism everywhere, and the author's analysis of the tactics and strategy employed will be invaluable to all who would resist them.

"Defence," he writes in his introduction, "is not a warlike activity, but a response to a warlike threat. Freedom and peace call for clear heads and stout hearts. These do not threaten anyone."

Kenneth McDonald contributes to Canadian journals and The Freeman *from his home in Toronto.*

Says Who?

by Janet Scott Barlow

Character: America's Search for Leadership
by Gail Sheehy
New York: William Morrow and Company; 303 pp., $17.95

◆

During the long election season just past, Gail Sheehy wrote for *Vanity Fair* a series of "character profiles" of various presidential candidates. Six of those profiles, together with an introductory essay and a long piece on Ronald Reagan, make up *Character: America's Search for Leadership*, Ms. Sheehy's latest book. In addition to Reagan, her subjects include Gary Hart, Jesse Jackson, Robert Dole, George Bush, Albert Gore Jr., and Michael Dukakis.

Neither a historian nor a psychologist, Gail Sheehy is instead a sort of psychological free-lancer, a self-styled specialist in the components of political leadership and personal character. She has a lot to say on these subjects, and makes several interrelated points about modern American politics. In a nutshell, they are: because (1) the presidency is an important office and (2) character reaps destiny, we as voters must (3) avoid reaping the destiny of a would-be President with flawed character, which is difficult to do because (4) candidates aren't always what they seem and voters are easily manipulated, therefore (5) Gail Sheehy will give us a hand because (6) she knows a lot more about character, politics, and us than we do.

Let's start with character. Ms. Sheehy defines character as "the enduring marks left by life that set one apart as an individual." These marks are determined by heredity and environment and become evident in how "people engage the great psychological issues of adulthood — or deny, defy, or elude them." What this means in terms of Ms. Sheehy's work is that when she approaches her subjects with her psychological microscope, *everything* is going to get a look-see.

Gail Sheehy gives three reasons why it is "not useful, but essential" that we examine the character of would-be Presidents. First, the world is a dangerous and complicated place and we must "protect ourselves from electing a person whose character flaws, once subjected to the pressures of leading a superpower through the nuclear age, can weaken or endanger the course of our future." I can't argue with that. On the other hand, I don't know a single person who ever voted for a candidate in the expectation that that candidate would "endanger the course of our future." But then, that's Ms. Sheehy's whole point — voters don't know what they're doing. Worse, they don't know that they don't know what they're doing.

In Ms. Sheehy's opinion, "[w]e have suffered repeated disillusionments with recent presidents because we failed to enter into the compact aware of even their most obvious patterns of behavior." Our political disillusionment, then, is the result of our behavioral ignorance. Ms. Sheehy's logic on this point is as follows: after seeing what Presidents do and don't do in office, we know what they are like; therefore, if we could see what potential Presidents are like, we would know what, once in office, they would and would not do. If, for instance, we had known what to look for and where to look, we could have interpreted correctly the clues of Ronald Reagan's childhood and spared ourselves disillusionment with a President who turned out to be "dithering," "passive," "fiscally incompetent," and without "human connections in any meaningful sense"; a President who displayed "self-delusion," "monumental insensitivity," and "almost pathetic failings"; a President under whose leadership "America's long-term economic health and international position of respect [were] weakened in critical ways."

The second reason to examine a candidate's character is that "we need the cold slap of insight to wake us up from the smoothly contrived images projected by highly paid professional media experts who market the candidates like perfumed soap." The slapper in this case is obviously Ms. Sheehy — the rest of us are slappees — because she thinks the American electorate (and often the media) have been gulled by the image-making efforts of nearly every victorious presidential candidate since 1964.

Ms. Sheehy's third reason for exam-

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ining the character of aspiring leaders is that it is good for us—*personally* good for us. Ms. Sheehy sees her character portraits as "case histories that instruct us in how, and how not, to conduct ourselves to win at life." Her subjects, as she presents them, teach us "the price for avoiding or denying confrontation with life's major passages"; they are a "mirror." But precisely what kind of mirror? Is Ms. Sheehy saying that we may find educational the life stories of American leaders? No, it's more than that. I think her suggestion is that the next time we're facing a personal crisis and feeling like losers at life, we might try asking ourselves how Al Gore would handle the problem.

In constructing her character profiles, Gail Sheehy employs a method to support a thesis. The method and the thesis happen to be one and the same: everything counts. Believing that "[a]ny odd bit of behavior . . . might be a clue to a larger truth," Ms. Sheehy bases her character analyses "on evidence—evidence I go out and dig up." What she digs up is a whole mess of people—past and present colleagues, ex-girlfriends, former neighbors, high-school coaches—whose observations all are given equal weight, whose possible motives for what they say or don't say go unexamined, whose clarity of memory is left unquestioned. Ms. Sheehy presents as character "evidence" people whose character (and in some cases whose very *names*) we do not know.

Only after talking to "thirty, forty, or fifty" sources, then conducting "at least two long interviews" with the candidate and traveling "extensively" in his company, does Gail Sheehy make her final character judgments. And how long does this process take? How long, for example, did it take her in 1984 to "find out who Gary Hart really was"? Well, the task of finding out what "made Gary Hart tick" took Gail Sheehy all of "a month"—quite a feat considering that "one political associate of Hart's after another" had said to Ms. Sheehy, "When you find out who Gary Hart is, let me know."

She let everyone know. But when some unity of public opinion did form about Hart's character, it was not because Gail Sheehy, in 1984, revealed what "made Gary Hart tick." It was because *The Miami Herald*, in 1987, reported what Gary Hart had *done*. The lesson here might be that to citizens, a candidate's actions speak louder than his ticking.

That is not Ms. Sheehy's message. In any case, her mission is to give lessons to, not take lessons from, the citizenry. Lesson number one: a person's psychological tick-tick, easily audible if you know how to listen, can be counted as a future action. And what does this have to do with the price of eggs? Well, now we're into lesson number two: elections aren't about the price of eggs. For Gail Sheehy, an election ideally is a shared national therapy session, in which candidates "are *made* to reveal" (the italics are mine) their true inner selves, while voters study this forced psychological disrobing and learn not only how to pick a foolproof President but how to "win at life."

Like many people who write about politics, Ms. Sheehy simplifies the complicated questions and complicates the simple ones. An election is a decision, period. And even if all of the parties on both sides of the decision arrive at the crucial moment by complex psychological routes, the decision-making itself proceeds in a fairly straightforward manner. You're the candidate, I'm the voter. I'm determining if I want you to be more than a candidate. I base my determination on what I believe, what you say (and sometimes what you've done), whether I agree with what you say, and whether I believe *you* believe what you say.

After the matter of values and the question of "issues" (which Ms. Sheehy dismisses as "too complex" to trust a candidate's positions on), voting can come down to raw instinct (*I just don't trust that guy*), pure emotion (*I just don't like that guy*), and, sometimes, plain human idiosyncrasy. I know a woman who refused to vote for George Bush because "his eyes are too close together." I overheard a woman in the grocery store say she wouldn't vote for Michael Dukakis because "his head is too big for his body." Reaction to a candidate's physical characteristics is not an intelligent basis on which to select a President. But in the end, it seems no riskier an approach than reaction to the recollections of a candidate's old girlfriend.

And after the election, then what? Some Presidents will be better at their job than others, and some citizens will be dissatisfied no matter who's in office or what he does. But by Gail Sheehy's reasoning, the fact that elected leaders can turn out to be flawed is proof that the electorate's criteria for leadership are flawed. By her reasoning, better leadership standards would ultimately result in less voter disenchantment. And how do we arrive at better standards? We can start by listening to Gail Sheehy. First, we must understand that enough "mental and moral distinguishing marks are evident by the time individuals seek or rise to high office to predict whether a leader might be weak or strong, sincere or tricky, good or bad." Then, we must use that understanding "to discern and weigh the innermost natures of our would-be leaders *before* they . . . take control of our fates."

Behind Ms. Sheehy's remedy for the prevention of bad Presidents and disillusioned citizens—behind her entire book—are two assumptions. One, she assumes it is actually possible to "discern and weigh the innermost natures" of people with whom we (voters) have never had, will never have, real human contact—people we don't *know*. Discerning and weighing a human being's innermost nature is, as Gail Sheehy is the first to acknowledge, a tall order. Ms. Sheehy's efforts on the Gary Hart case notwithstanding, I think the project takes more than a month.

Ms. Sheehy's second assumption is that once all of a would-be leader's "mental and moral distinguishing marks" are made evident (presumably by Ms. Sheehy), something close to a public consensus will follow on the meaning of those "marks." But Ms. Sheehy herself, in yet another of her points about the pervasiveness of political image-making, cites a "massive" 1987 *Los Angeles Times* study that found that "Americans are divided into *nine* different value orientations." Does she have any idea what she revealed with that single illustration? Does she know what the fact of nine (or five, or eight, or twelve) different value orientations means? It means it *isn't easy* to reach collective agreement about a candidate's identity, much less the interpretation of a candidate's "mental and moral distinguishing

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marks." It also means that in *Character*, Gail Sheehy is talking to herself and the approximately two hundred other people across America who consider it "not only useful but essential" to know what went through Michael Dukakis's mind when he "first realized [he] wouldn't grow up to be a giant." (And while we're at it, will someone explain to me why serious, successful men, while seeking the most responsible office in the country, think they are obliged to trace for public consumption their feelings about their *height*? Before long, reporters will be asking stuff like, "What do you have to say to those Americans who think your head is too big for your body?")

Using rambling sentences, imprecise quasi-scientific language, and an earnest I'm-sorry-to-have-to-say-this voice, Gail Sheehy draws often negative and always confident conclusions about her subjects. Her business isn't impressions, it's judgments. She presumes to know large things about important people. If the nature of her business and the scale of her presumption give her pause, she doesn't show it. It is breathtaking to realize, for instance, that the gist of her character judgment of Ronald Reagan—made ever so regretfully but without batting an eye—is that the only eight-year President in recent history was all but loony.

Only once, briefly and unconvincingly, does Gail Sheehy acknowledge that others might disagree with her findings: "Some readers will make their own connections between the many details offered in these portraits, and come out with a very different assessment of a candidate's character." But that assumes readers will take seriously enough her self-blended combination of political reporting and psychological dirt-digging to actually appraise her conclusions. Some won't get that far. Somewhere out among those "nine different value orientations" is at least one group whose first reaction after reading Ms. Sheehy's character assessments will be: *says who*? If Gail Sheehy really wants more discerning, less impressionable citizens, she will, in that group, have found them.

Janet Scott Barlow writes from Cincinnati.

Madness in Great Ones

by Peter Laurie

Ezra Pound: The Solitary Volcano
by John Tytell
New York: Doubleday; 384 pp., $19.95

◆

The American poet and man of letters John Berryman created in his half-memoir, half-short story "The Imaginary Jew" what is very likely the most powerfully compressed vision of vulgar, visceral racism in our literature. In this present, honorably intended biography of Ezra Pound by an apparently Jewish and leftist professor at Queens College (whose previous books have dealt with Beats and radicals), we will not find that Pound the anti-Semite, whom Berryman visited regularly in a federal madhouse, told many, including Berryman himself, that he considered "The Imaginary Jew" a masterpiece. Nor do we learn of Pound's hefty personal check to Louis Zukofsky (part of Pound's *Dial* award he might well have spent upon himself, Zukofsky being Jewish, Marxist, experimental, and in need), which Zukofsky chose to keep forever uncashed as a monument to artistic magnanimity.

Nor does Tytell mention that history repeated itself later when Hemingway was moved (in spite of his total contempt for the political follies that got Pound put away in the first place) to send him the last of his Nobel money—along with the medal itself!—which the novelist asked Pound to keep till he got his own. Pound returned the medal but not the check. That he had locked in lucite, in spite of his own financial need. "Hem," he would reminisce in deep age after the novelist's suicide, "had a gift for friendship."

Clearly Pound did, too. He got on with more creative geniuses who could not abide one another; influenced more of them to the good; publicized, cajoled, defended, promoted, and coached more of the obviously gifted of his own time than probably any other single patron, with the possible exception of Maecenas and various Medicis—and *he* had no money, and *they* were not artists. Mr. Tytell seems honestly to believe himself when he suspects Pound may have done it all—a thousand or so pieces of correspondence, among other things, per year, over decades—out of self-promotion, though he was the least conventionally successful of the great writers of his time.

The problem is, was, and will be that Pound's genius was of a unique sort that seemed to embrace the highest reaches of human aspiration *as well as* the lowest depths of human claptrap. He saw through most of the conspiracies of most of the eras of most of the great civilizations only to be suckered into one of the worst ever, right in his own time, sincerely believing the Axis were out to end Usury—the root cause, for Pound, of the collapse of civilizations through the ages—whereas it now seems entirely self-evident that it was simply its latest, worst form.

What is clear, though, is that Pound acted, in his distraught and mistaken way, to preserve civilization. One important letter to Mussolini (which Tytell takes no note of, perhaps because he appears to have only the shakiest grasp of the relevant foreign languages as well as of Pound's actual motivation) goes something like, "For twenty years you have said you would move against the monopolies, and you still have not; you have said you would move against the gold dealers, the munitions cartel, the banks, the insurance magnates," and so on, on and on for several amazing pages—to which Mussolini, having been a tool of precisely all those interests, appears to have made no answer, perhaps, for once, out of respect for the truth. One must ask again and again as one plows through Mr. Tytell's almost clinically detached mosaic of megalomania, racism, and political crankhood whether he even *likes* art, whether the obvious contemporary smash-up of human heart, mind, soul, heritage, and will touches him at all.

But, worse luck for all of us, it's the *age* that seems to have managed to embrace the highest reaches of human aspiration simultaneously with the lowest depths of claptrap. Hardly any of the artists of the first half of our century were at all sanguine about the era they were forced to suffer through and into. Now they seem, frankly, *well out of it*, since communism, fascism,

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and the present comprehensively conformist subjugation of our own heritage of respect for the individual may all equally stem from the 20th century's self-congratulatory promotion (as defined by an international credit monopoly) of so-called ordinary people, an orthodoxy of nobodyhood and nothingness that thrives on the suppression not only of Napoleons of Poetry like Pound, but all our Jeffersons, Edisons, Einsteins, Henry Fords, and Bucky Fullers, past or to come, as well.

We all survive, average Joe, genius, and plutocrat, on the collective heritage of superior acts of intelligence, perseverance, productivity, and unselfishness. We find it convenient to refer to this as human genius. But the establishment of our time seems to have taught itself an ultimate barbarous lesson: that there is an infinitude of profit in encouraging human corruptibility. Call it Apocalypse? As soon as the parasite has killed the host, the parasite will also die.

The struggle to maintain any of the glorious and useful traditions of human genius in an age that seems so bent on enthusiastically denouncing, discrediting, and abolishing them might well have produced a certain sense of strain. In Pound's case, this struggle led to uncontrollable wrath combined with political delusion, not entirely unlike Dante's, who stuck several of his worst enemies in Hell as much out of spite as anything, and whose worshipful attitude toward the would-be conqueror of Tuscany might have proved as mistaken as Pound's toward Mussolini—had Henry of Luxembourg lived.

It is worth noting, too, that Shakespeare's evident and potentially deeply compromising involvement with Essex and Southampton might not have passed for complete political wisdom, had anyone been in a position to think about it in the intervening four centuries. (Nobody was; only very recent scholarship has been able to uncover what the Bard kept hidden.) If *Timon* (apparently abandoned as unproducible) had seen the light of day, one might well have wondered about its author's soundness of mind.

As for Pound's grudge against his native land, I note only that Melville's going quietly mad in the East Lansingburg post office or Miss Dickinson's agonizing secret little verses she stuffed into her mattress or Whitman's selling pencils, palsied and alone, in the streets of Camden or Hemingway's putting the muzzle in his mouth or Berryman's waving and flying off the bridge above a frozen Mississippi are not events to inspire confidence in our nation's abiding love for literary art. Nor is it easy to admire the state of mind that awards an absolute army of mediocrities for their half-century of conscious willful fellow-traveling while refusing Pound any benefit of doubt in spite of his lifelong devotion to the principles of the Founders, in spite of his admission of error, in spite of a punishment cumulatively worse than death by firing squad.

So once upon, well, a time, a little before the Age of the Hero finally came to an end, our then-greatest poet sailed his silvery voice over the blue and not-yet-polluted waters of Lake Ontario in prophetic prayer for the resumption, after civil war, of the unique destiny of Americans:

> the gait they have of persons
> *who never*
> knew how it felt to stand
> in the
> presence of superiors

. . . But unfortunately the prophecy, unheeded, coincided with the beginning of the systematic corruption of our public life (the Grant administration, Boss Tweed, Mark Hanna, on and on) that brought shame upon our first centennial. Whitman died broken, destitute, unread, a little ways across the Camden River from a seven-year-old boy, the only offspring of the assistant assayer for the Franklin Mint, whose own father had been a prominent congressman dedicated to reform of the nation's monetary system according to the principles of the Founders and the Constitution.

This boy grew up to become far and away the most completely controversial and difficult poet of modern times, yet always a defender of our Constitution, Walt Whitman's truest and best successor, a final heroic personality struggling, sometimes unsuccessfully, in the universal *oobleck* of the Age of Fools. When Pound walked "under the larches of paradise" of the arboretum of the asylum of St. Elizabeths in Washington, he walked where Whitman had

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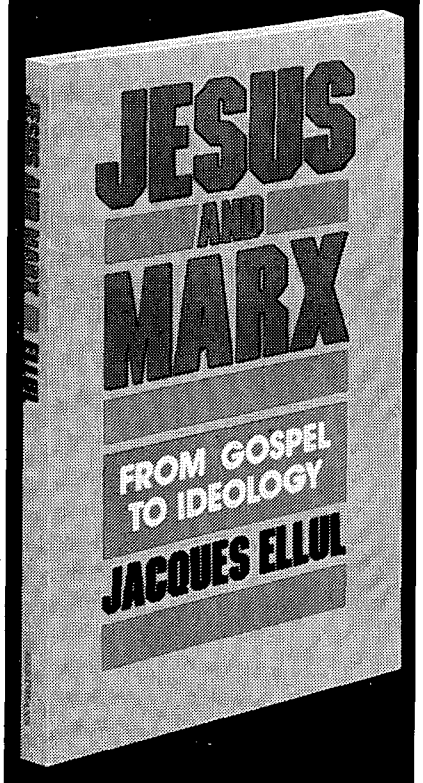

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walked before him, during our first national catastrophe, when the future madhouse was a hospital for Union soldiers ("Bearing the bandages, water, and sponge . . . ").

However hard Pound tried to write in the Dantean tradition of comedy and paradise, the times would permit of nothing short of Apocalypse — Apocalypse therefore discounted, especially by those happy to be living in this Age of Fools because they were instrumental in bringing it on, or because they are inadvertent beneficiaries of it. There is a third factor, of course, the unmentionable, unpleasant fact upon which democracies stumble and tyrannies ride: that most men *are* fools — but let it pass. For the rest of us, in spite of this underdone study of the life of Ezra Pound, there might be some meaning in *The Cantos*' music, a cycle as bitter in the end as *Winterreise*:

> In meiner heimat
> where the dead walked
> and the living were
> made of cardboard.

We might hear, and out of shame regain, that gait we had "of persons who never knew how it felt to stand in the presence of a superior." Otherwise it is just as well that the nation of, by, and for the people perish from the earth.

Peter Laurie is a poet and scholar whose work has appeared in Poetry, St. Andrews Review, *and* The Harvard Advocate.

Pound Foolish

by David R. Slavitt

A Serious Character: The Life of Ezra Pound
by Humphrey Carpenter
Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin; 1,005 pp., $40.00

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The question arises very early on and looms ever larger as one progresses through this thousand-page-long life: how did Humphrey Carpenter stand it? Pound's range was from loathsome or contemptible at the beginning to hateful at the apex of his career, and finally to pitiable at the end. To have continued with this distasteful project, to be obliged each day to face once again the dreary prospect of returning to Pound's dank and unremitting unattractiveness, must have been taxing indeed. It isn't easy for a reader, even in boots, to wade through this swampy stuff.

On the other hand, the book is admirable for its thorough and even-handed presentation of most of the facts of Pound's life. It makes a valuable contribution — if only as a corrective to much of the bemusement of the past generation or two. Pound scholarship is a medium-sized academic industry (particularly among those who dislike literature and who hate students, and for whom the obvious choice is between Joyce and Pound). Philip Larkin was quite correct when he said that *The Cantos* were nothing more than "a long twentieth-century poetic curiosity." Pound's odd career and influence were symptomatic of what was and to some degree still is awfully wrong with high culture.

Let's begin with Carpenter's title, which has got to be at least partly ironic. The line, as the biographer makes clear in a couple of epigraphs, is from Pound himself. He was quoted by Charles Olson as having asked, in 1913, "are you or are you not, a serious character?" Pound used the phrase again, in 1936, in a letter to James Laughlin, this time spelling it "a seereeyus kerakter," which is hardly what any halfway serious character would do. Indeed, that pidgin English Pound invented quite early, perhaps to mask his deficiencies in spelling and typing, gave rise eventually to his bizarre mature style, a blend of the antique and the high-flown with a jokey private patois that verged on baby talk. The dreadful character of that idiolect, it seems to me, lies very close to the heart of the trouble.

Even though he was born in Hailey, Idaho, Pound was essentially a Philadelphian, grew up there, and went to school there (Cheltenham Military Academy, two years at the University of Pennsylvania, and then, after finishing his undergraduate work at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, graduate work at the U. of P.) And it is with W.C. Fields, another Philadelphian, that Pound shares his odd twangy drawl, at the same time high-flown and apologetic, pompous and cringing, in which the mask of aggression is all the more compelling because we know it to be at least partly real.

Pound was a nasty kid, a misfit at Cheltenham, a washout at Penn (he did well in geometry, got an acceptable B in English, but failed history, which sounds about right) and so out of step at Hamilton that no fraternity would have him even though that was very much a fraternity school. What Pound's reaction was to this, what he learned from the experience and seems to have followed him for the rest of his life, was his use of literature and the intellect as a weapon. He learned how to sound as though he knew more than he did, to talk authoritatively about books he hadn't read through (or even at all), and, in short, how to be the epic pain in the ass he later turned into.

More important, the particularly stupid and unattractive shape of his unease begins in this formative period. As Carpenter says, speaking of his moves from Hailey and from house to house in Philadelphia and its suburbs, Jenkintown and Wyncote, "throughout his life he never lived anywhere that was unarguably 'home,' a place where his family belonged and had a personal history." Carpenter nowhere makes explicit the connection that seems clear to me — that in his wounded pride he needed inferiors to look down upon. It was not at all original for him to pick on foreigners, for there was anti-Semitic and anti-Italian sentiment in Wyncote before Pound. What is interesting is that he became a foreigner himself — living much of the time in Italy and acting all the time as a cosmopolitan, a polyglot, a man of exotic books, and an exile, at first from his native country and then, in 1920, when he left England, from the territory of his native language. With the odd broken English he affected, these are all the conventional attributes of the Jews he hated, wrote about, and came so much to resemble, even down to that scraggly beard. It was — without indulging too much in what Pound dismissed as "kikeiatry" — a curious and deadly combination of envy and self-loathing. And it wasn't just an incidental irrelevance either, but a central feature of his life and, more important, his work.

Literature is a club of one kind or

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another. Those writers who are comfortable with themselves think of it as a conversation in a pleasant and sheltered space, maybe with a bar and a good library and pleasant nooks for chatting with friends. But it can also be a club of the other kind, a blunt instrument to beat enemies over the head with — and this was, clearly, how Pound saw it. He was an ambitious little huckster, vulgar, loud, and irksome. His domestic life was a disaster — his children were walking wounded — and his friendships were, with only a few exceptions, mutual benefit societies more than impromptu associations of like-minded people. (Excepting only Eliot and Williams, Pound either withdrew himself or dismissed the other party in these conjunctions; his only constancy seems to have consisted of behaving badly.) He was a promoter and manipulator, a Barnum but without Barnum's generosity or high spirits, and with acts that were less immediately promotable. Not surprisingly, he was less successful than Barnum.

He left the States and, from London, wrote (in 1913 in an article that appeared in *Poetry*) that his aim in England had been to make friends with as many as possible of "the two hundred most interesting people" on the island. As for the remainder, "I do not see that we need to say the rest live under them, but it is certain that what these [two hundred] people say comes to pass." America, he said, resembled England with "the two hundred most interesting people removed." But it wasn't very long before he was railing against the Brits, too: "I have an absolute mistrust of anything English, particularly of any 'upper class' interest in literature . . . I don't want to appear [in print] in England. I have no belief in their capacity to understand anything," he wrote in 1922 — to his pal, T.S. Eliot, that sedulous clerk to all things upper class and English. To someone else he expressed his animus somewhat differently: "the history of English literature," he said, was solely "as shown in her exiles: Landor in Italy, Keats, Shelley, Byron, Beddoes out of England, Browning in Italy."

In Paris and then in Italy, he continued to mimic those Jews he hated, living in a small enclave of fellow exiles, reading exotic books, and writing a willful pidgin one would have expected of a caricature immigrant on Hester Street but laced with Latin, Greek, Chinese, Egyptian, and other tags of languages in which his ignorance was laughable to anyone who knew them enough to see the joke.

That some of his literary picks-n-pans turned out to be accurate is not surprising — he was in the right place at the right time, and if he made enough bets, some of them were bound to win. He could be helpful, as he obviously was to Eliot in his suggestions for cuts and rewrites in *The Waste Land*. He could even sometimes manage, on his own, an interesting and unblemished poem. (It is depressing to go back and see how few of these there are.) But *The Cantos* were a pompous and absurd failure the wide acceptance of which in academic circles is a better and nastier kind of joke than any he ever managed to put over on the rubes.

The weakest part of Humphrey Carpenter's generally excellent book is the middle, where he writes about Pound at work, either writing or wheeling and dealing with editors, publishers, and other writers. The comeuppance at the end is interesting, too, and also depressing, as we watch Pound persisting in his demented Jew-baiting, and his less-than-gracious behavior to his old friends Archibald MacLeish and Robert Frost, who were working to get him liberated from the booby hatch. Carpenter's presentation of the poetry is diligent, but one gathers that he doesn't much like it even though he doesn't want to come right out and say so. Any writer or critic who thinks "The River Merchant's Wife: A Letter" is "indeed the most appealing poem of Ezra's whole career" is probably not a committed Poundian. On the other hand, had Carpenter dismissed most of the poetic production, he'd have raised a difficult question about what the point of the biography was — or its excuse.

I do think this is a worthwhile and important work that needs no excuse, for it seems to me that it has importance insofar as it explains, or exposes, the general Pound phenomenon. It is nothing less than phenomenal that a crude and contemptible fellow, quite reasonably accused of treason (he was committed to St. Elizabeths for 11 years and the prosecution was finally dropped), whose major work was, by his own estimate, a failure and is at any rate posturing, batty, incoherent, and dripping with the worst kind of venom, could hold so honored a place in the American curriculum. At the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, the veneration is such that the cardboard boxes in which many of Pound's papers arrived have been reboxed and are, themselves, catalogued and, because the poet had put his name and return address on them, described as "Autographed Boxes, Signed." This isn't literary scholarship but the veneration of a saint's relics.

That Pound was no saint, this book makes clear. Indeed, we are not far from that depressing nightmare country Don DeLillo described in *White Noise* in which there is, at The College on the Hill, a department of Hitler Studies.

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Making History

by Clyde Wilson

Requiem: Variations on Eighteenth-Century Themes
by Forrest McDonald and Ellen Shapiro McDonald
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas; 216 pp., $19.95

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The best historical writings, whatever their subject matter, have certain characteristics in common. All display a deft mastery of primary sources, building up from a solid base of fact without allowing the data to drag them down into pedantry. They also bear on their faces both an open and honest viewpoint *and* objectivity. That is, the best historian is a writer of conviction and values who is yet able to view all sides of a question and to state opposing arguments honestly, the rarest of all faculties in modern discourse. Then, the best history must deal with high and not trivial matters. Finally, the best histories are relevant, not in the sense of pandering to the fashions

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of the moment, but in the sense that they give any intelligent reader food for thought about his own times.

These virtues are all splendidly marshaled in *Requiem*, the McDonalds' collection of occasional pieces on the early years of the American federal republic. Each of the 11 essays takes up a familiar and problematic question of those days—Shays' Rebellion, John Dickinson, the "middle party" in the Philadelphia Convention, the relation of the Framers to capitalism, the ambivalent evolution of the doctrine of separation of powers, the rituals of 18th-century war in relation to the American War of Independence, the role of Alexander Hamilton, the legacies of Washington and Jefferson to the office of the presidency, and others. And each is a gem of historical analysis, interpretation, and nonsuperficial relevance, from which the Founders emerge as neither plaster saints nor archaic curiosities, but as real, flawed, and extraordinary human beings.

It is probably true that all good history is sober, if not indeed somber; such must be the usual reaction of any honest student of the human condition. Few experiences are more sobering than being regularly compelled to compare the achievements of our Fathers with what 20th-century Americans have made of those achievements, which perhaps justifies the melancholy title of this collection. The respectful realism of these essays provides a good antidote to the mindless sentimentality of sunshine patriots and the compulsive hectoring of self-appointed re-Founders under whom we have suffered during the Constitution's bicentennial celebration.

The last essay is a masterful historical exposition of "Federalism in America" and concludes with the wisest and saddest words of the bicentennial: "Political scientists and historians are in agreement that federalism is the greatest contribution of the Founding Fathers to the science of government. It is also the only feature of the Constitution that has been successfully exported, that can be employed to protect liberty elsewhere in the world. Yet what we invented, and others imitate, no longer exists on its native shores."

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The Speechless Sick

by Dan McMurry

Nowhere To Go: The Tragic Odyssey of the Homeless Mentally Ill
by E. Fuller Torrey
New York: Harper & Row; 256 pp., $18.95

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Two-Step is a tall, skinny black man who has lived at the Nashville Union Rescue Mission for seven years. In nice weather he can be seen standing beside the Mission holding his pajama bottom up with one hand and doing a slow, rhythmical shuffle, hour after hour. He has been doing this since he was brought to the front of the Mission seven years ago from Central State, the mental hospital where he had spent all his adult life. Two-Step would like this book. It would explain important things to him, such as why he is now out on the street, doing a two-step in the sunshine, struggling to survive in a chaotic world he doesn't understand.

But Two-Step doesn't understand why, nor do the other mentally ill among the half million or more homeless persons lining the nation's streets or adding to the hopelessly overburdened jails and prisons. Dr. Torrey documents with precision and clarity the process by which Two-Step came to shuffle in the sunshine by the Mission, and it is a story that every legislator should know.

Freud is part of the tragic tale, and so are the dreamy political tinkerings of the Camelot era. But the broom that was to sweep the mental hospitals clean was made in the busy Social Planning Workshops of the Great Society of President Lyndon Johnson. From the early postwar years a movement led by "politically sensitive" psychiatrists had actively opposed the large state mental hospital structure. This movement sprung in large part from the orchestrated "outrage" of the "conchies" (conscientious objectors) who were allowed to work as attendants in mental hospitals in place of serving in combat units. And by the late 50's a group at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) had begun discussing "mental health" as a solution to the growing ills of the cities, especially poverty. Dr. Leonard Duhl, then chief of planning at NIMH, said that mental disease was a "socially defined condition" and that mental health "must be conceived as a social problem."

The problem then was no longer the care of mentally ill patients; it was now to minister to a "mentally ill society." Duhl had argued earlier that nothing would be accomplished if a patient from a low-income background was cured in the hospital and then returned to the poverty community. "It is therefore the total society," Duhl had said, "that needs a mental health treatment program." No one questioned how removing the mentally ill from the hospitals *to the community* would serve as a "mental health treatment program" *for the community*. (Actually, it did. But it wasn't the kind of treatment program Duhl and the others had in mind.)

By the summer of 1963 the struggle of the activists to replace mental hospitals with community mental health centers (CMHC) was nearing an end. Substituting CMHC's, not-yet built and only vaguely developed, for inpatient mental hospitals was the first domino. The political groundwork was done by Duhl, Dumont, and other like-minded psychiatrists at NIMH. Social education was accomplished by a then-rising guru of psychedelic drugs, Ken Kesey, with his *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. (The movie version has been required viewing for five generations of college students.) In college, students read Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* and Goffman's *Asylums*. The first vows that mental diseases do not actually exist but are merely labels; the second asserts that "if somebody would just open the gates and let these people out, the patients would not have to behave strangely anymore."

All that was needed now to accomplish the long-awaited task of "returning the mentally ill to the community" was somebody with the key to the gate. Just 22 days before he was assassinated, President Kennedy signed the legislation creating community mental health centers. But those who believed that the patients no longer "would have to behave strangely" or that they would be cared for in the community mental health centers were going to be shocked.

There were about one-half million

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patients in public mental hospitals in the early 60's. During the next decade, four of every five would be released. *This* is what that word is all about. "Deinstitutionalization," says Torrey, "which originally implied services, follow-up, and aftercare, has instead been an act of dumping unprepared patients into unwilling and unready communities." The community health centers, rather than attempting to care for the depressing, seriously ill ex-patients, turned instead to schools for drunken drivers and to fawning over the "worried well." As a consequence, upwards of 200,000 mentally ill are now left with "nowhere to go" but to wander the streets of every large city in the nation. The drain on the already strained budgets and energy resources of large cities—for police, indigent health care, and public assistance—has been enormous. Lack of aftercare for the mentally ill has produced economic and political aftershocks that have shaken city governments.

Torrey provides us with good news and bad news. The bad news is that we have learned so little from the tragedy. The issue continues to be dominated by those public officials, many of whom maintain that the homeless mentally ill are individuals without homes who *became* mentally ill *because* they were homeless. Remember that was the argument of those who emptied the mental hospitals in the first place: these people behave strangely *because* they are locked up in mental hospitals. Thus, the victims cannot be returned to the hospitals nor be treated for their illness before they are "decently housed" which, in effect, dooms them to remain *mentally ill on the streets*.

There are two pieces of good news. First, Torrey says that there is sufficient money available to provide excellent care for the mentally ill—$17 billion in 1985. (Isn't it refreshing to hear someone say that money is not the problem?) That is encouraging and half the battle. And then, there is this book. Reading the account of how a few highly motivated visionaries were able to change the entire structure of care for the mentally ill in a decade is a testament to perseverance. What is needed now—and desperately so by the suffering mentally ill on the sidewalks—is a group of highly motivated visionaries dedicated to changing the entire structure again, this time in the best interest of the mentally ill who have been made homeless. If there is not a group of men and women so dedicated already in place, then it is up to the next administration to put them there.

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Weighing Freedom

by Juliana Geran Pilon

Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties 1987-1988
by Raymond D. Gastil
New York: Freedom House; 450 pp., $29.50 (hardcover), $12.95 (paper)

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This yearbook, prepared by Freedom House—a private nonprofit foundation from New York—is the tenth in the series of annual comparative surveys of political and civil liberties in the world. Started in 1972, the Freedom House project to assess the status of freedom around the globe has become an indispensable gauge for anyone interested in the progress of liberty.

The heart of the survey is a table rating each country on a seven-point scale for political and civil freedom, then providing an overall judgment of each as "free," "partly free," or "not free." A rating of one indicates the freest, of seven the least free.

Such tables, however, are not flawless. Putting Argentina, for example, in the same category as the United States ("free") will undoubtedly offend many, as should the placement of dynamic Taiwan alongside still-Communist Poland and increasingly pro-Soviet Nicaragua (all "partly free"). To consider Iran and Zimbabwe, as the survey does, "partly free," alongside South Korea and Singapore, is also peculiar—suggesting a need for finer distinctions.

In addition to the table itself there are brief summaries of the human rights situation in every country. While less detailed than the State Department's annual Country Reports on Human Rights, the survey summaries offer an evaluation of every nation's attitude toward the individual.

And this is where the problems start. The statement, for instance, that in Romania "Soviet influence is relatively slight" is simpleminded at best, given the interrelation of the two countries' intelligence services. The section on Afghanistan says nothing about Soviet use of chemical warfare against the local population, of toy bombs that have maimed children, or other terrorist tactics—making it less accurate even than the relatively restrained Special Rapporteur's Report on Afghanistan prepared for the UN Human Rights Commission. Similarly, the section on Israel makes no mention of Palestinian attacks against Jews—as would be required to put the picture in proper context. Moreover, nowhere in the survey is there any discussion of state-sponsored terrorism and its uses. Since terrorist attacks obviously violate human rights, some sort of discussion of the subject would have been helpful.

The essays in *Freedom in the World* are also disappointing at best, beginning with the introductory piece by Raymond Gastil. Gastil warns us, for example, not to take literally the claim of countries calling themselves "Democratic" (as in "German Democratic Republic"), but then issues the same warning about German fascists, claiming that their "National Socialist" label was fraudulent. Yet socialists they certainly were, albeit somewhat less totalitarian than their internationalist brethren.

Still more disappointing is the analysis of freedom by Thomas D. Anderson, geography professor at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. He places countries in six categories, the most favorable of which is "countries where all elements of individual rights are specified by law and presently are extended to all inhabitants without restriction." The result, however, is that countries with more liberal immigration policies or a varied citizenry will fare worse than their more restrictive or homogeneous counterparts because of "minorities" problems—not necessarily caused by legal impediments. In Anderson's ratings, culturally homogeneous Austria is placed in group I while the US, UK, and most Western democracies are in group II. Yet surely it would appear that part of what is

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meant by "individual rights" should include the right to private ownership. In Austria, however, this right is severely curtailed: banks and heavy industry are largely nationalized, and, no less important, radio and television are state-owned—both serious marks against the country's record on individual freedom.

The article on "The Interrelationship of Freedom, Equality, and Development" by Harmon Zeigler, a professor of politics and government at the University of Puget Sound, contains even more peculiar claims. While conceding the existence of privileges in Communist countries—contrary to strict Marxist ideology—Zeigler warns against being too critical of that system. For example, he points to the "fact" that income distribution in the USSR is similar to that of industrial democracies—never mind the unreliability of statistics in a nonmarket context, the deliberate distortions of data for political purposes, or nonmonetary privileges that differentiate the party elites from the masses qualitatively as well as quantitatively. Zeigler, it seems, gives the edge to the Soviets, since though life there is admittedly "grim," still, "nobody starves, nobody is denied medical attention, nobody is unemployed, and there are no 'street people.'"

The most critical flaw in the survey, however, is a systematic misunderstanding of the economic dimension of individual liberty. The economic aspect of rights, in this volume, seems to imply either economic indexes such as infant mortality, GNP, and adult literacy (for which a statistical table is provided) or, in Gastil's words, an assessment that "a system [is] free primarily to the extent that the people [are] actually given a choice in determining the nature of their economic system." The former approach, through economic indexes, tells nothing about legal protection for individual initiative or private property. The second definition begs the question of how "the people"—taken somehow as a whole—might make such a "choice."

Philosophical issues aside, I feel vaguely disappointed by a volume devoted to individual liberty that fails to include some sense of the subjective: how it feels to live without freedom, what tyranny is all about, and, for that matter, what heroism is. A selection, say, from Natan Sharansky's *Fear No Evil*, or from Armando Valladares' accounts of his suffering, or from any number of other personal stories might have made the message more real and tangible. But that would have demanded a very different book.

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A Sacred Social Order

by Harold O.J. Brown

Twin Powers: Politics and the Sacred
by Thomas S. Molnar
Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; 142 pp., $9.95 (paper)

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In *Twin Powers*, Thomas Molnar, one of our age's most imaginative and creative thinkers, confronts us, like Hannah Arendt and Eric Voegelin before him, with an analysis of our social, political, and cultural situation that is both fascinating and frustrating: fascinating, because it seems to explain so much; frustrating, because it appears very difficult to *do* anything with the knowledge that he gives us. One is left with the feeling that one has understood the problem but is powerless to do anything about it.

Molnar's thesis, which he develops carefully with many illustrations, is that power—the political order—needs to be based on a vision of a sacred order if it is to endure and to be healthy. He contends that in "postmodern" Western civilization, we have totally lost the concept of a transcendent sacred order and have substituted for it a kind of immanent sacredness based on the individual, an unstable situation that Molnar characterizes as "fragile" and productive of a constant state of anxiety and tension.

Published in September 1988, *Twin Powers* must have been written before the 1988 presidential campaign was well under way. In the aftermath of what was a personal triumph for Bush, somewhat soured by the Republicans' losses in Congress, as we ponder the direction that the new administration will be able to give our "stumbling giant" of a country, Molnar provides us with a diagnosis that sounds rather like irreversible arteriosclerosis. We no longer have a sacred vision, for we have been dismantling it since the days of the later Scholastics at least, and we cannot have a viable society without one. This leads inexorably to a melancholy vision of America's future, since it seems hardly likely that in our pluralistic society we will ever be able to lay such a foundation afresh.

Molnar contends that until the Western "break"—which he asserts had begun long *before* the Protestant Reformation—all societies have lived out of a vision of a sacred order. Nineteenth-century sociologists and anthropologists assumed that such a religious outlook was a projection of the self-awareness of the particular community, but now it is more generally admitted that communities do not "deify" themselves, but somehow perceive, by intuition or revelation, a transcendent Other from beyond their own human boundaries. Both in *Twin Powers* and its immediate predecessor, *The Pagan Temptation* (Eerdmans, 1987), Molnar emphasizes that there is a fundamental difference between the common human vision of the sacred, which he calls "pagan," which locates the divine in this world, and the monotheistic Jewish and Christian vision, which sees only God as holy and honors, but does not worship, the world as his handiwork. Both paganism and biblical religion possess a vision of the sacred, but the biblical vision is so lean and austere, and involves so much pruning of man's fertile religious imagination, that the process of going biblical, so to speak, may fail to stop in time and may go on to demolish biblical ideas and symbols as well. Molnar clearly wants to preserve that which is truly sacred while ridding us of the spurious claims to sacredness of created things. Unfortunately, the campaign to desacralize the world seems to have gone too far, and Molnar does not think that it can be reversed.

Molnar believes that power, deprived of any sacred sanction, is atrophying in the West and, having lost all moderation, is in a state of hypertrophy

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in the Communist East. The loss of all sacred vision and our consequent myopic preoccupation with man and his presumed abilities led first to Utopianism, which is still honored, at least formally, in the Communist world, but which in the West has given way to an increasing moral fatigue, based on an awareness of man's limitations, a sense of man's inability to meet his needs on his own.

Molnar speaks of a battle between two schools of historical and cultural analysis: the optimists, who look on the break with the past as a good thing, and think that man can build a hopeful future without sacred sanctions by means of his own science and rationality, and the pessimists, who see the rupture with the past as fatal and irremediable, and think that man faces a "robotized future" such as that envisaged by George Orwell and Aldous Huxley. Two classes of people stand on the sidelines: the "happy hedonists," who are content to satisfy their material and sensual needs, and the strong believers, who look to the final triumph of faith. Although Molnar is definitely a believer, he is not prepared to join the spectators, but wants to do something, or at least to say something. He may have presented us with such a bleak diagnosis that no therapy will be attempted.

Molnar asserts that humanity cannot create its own sacred order. A myth is unpersuasive if we know that we have made it up ourselves. Yet it is impossible for a community to exist without such an order. He is not categorical in asserting that a rational community is totally impossible without a sacred component, but says that we are now attempting it for the first time in history. Therefore we do not yet know whether success will be possible. There seems to be a certain ambivalence in his position, as he first says that it simply is not possible, and then suggests that it really hasn't been properly tried, no doubt because man really is incapable of attempting to live rationally without the sacred in a consistent way or over a long period. The ultimate result of the attempt to have a rational society without the sacred will be the Hobbesian *bellum omnium contra omnes*. Man cannot live without the sacred, and having lost it, he cannot create it for himself. What then may one hope? The soul, a "rectifier of matter," "may at any time request divine assistance." This, Molnar says, is not a program for civilization but something better than a program, namely, "hope." His concluding sentiment reminds one of the last lines of the Apocalypse: "Come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

Twin Powers is difficult to read and probably should be read after *The Pagan Temptation*. And it left me with a sense of frustration, because *if* Molnar is fundamentally right—and his erudition and arguments are impressive—then it does not help us much to know what he wants to teach us. We will understand some important things, but we will not be able to say, "*Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.*" We will rather be in a situation where, "*Tout comprendre, c'est tout souffrir*": "To understand it all is to endure it all."

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REVISIONS

GRAND ILLUSIONS

"America doesn't have a foreign policy," one of our editors is fond of saying. All we have is a variety of tactics employed by competing agencies, branches of government, and political parties. Like the Romans, we have done all right by muddling through—a good deal better than regimes that had a grand strategy. Louis XIV, Napoleon, and Hitler all devised master plans that brought their masters to grief.

David M. Abshire thinks it is time we developed "A Realistic Grand Strategy," which just happens to be the subtitle of his new book, *Preventing World War III* (New York: Harper & Row; 331 pp., $19.95). Abshire has all the necessary qualifications for a strategist, including service as our NATO ambassador, assistant secretary of state, and president of the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Most of Abshire's recommendations are eminently sensible and have received praise from Sam Nunn, Henry Kissinger, and Bill Brock. In this scheme, Washington would get its act together, concert our efforts with NATO, cease to rely single-mindedly on a nuclear deterrence strategy that does our European allies little good, and make sure that, whatever our grand strategy, it will enjoy broad public understanding and support.

All types of from-the-top-down global analysis run the risk of excessive tidiness that sacrifices political reality to the rules of some hypothetical game. Strategists and negotiators who spend too much time with NATO or the UN may begin to forget that they represent their nation's interest, not the cause of global harmony. They also fall prey to the delusion that rich and famous statesmen are necessarily in possession of political wisdom denied to the lesser mortals who only pay the bills.

Abshire is not entirely immune to the disease. When it comes to economic matters, the actual interests of the American people take a back seat to his concern for the global economy, global interdependence, and the tender feelings of our Japanese "allies." He even goes so far as to remind us to consider the 240,000 American jobs owned by Japanese industry as a rough equivalent to $9.3 billion of exports. What a relief. The Japanese are not only swamping American markets with their electronic gewgaws ripped off from US patents, they are so heavily invested in stocks, real estate, and manufacturing that we should feel grateful to them.

Set aside the dubious friendship of the Japanese, who will never forgive us for showing up their master-race pretensions. Canadian and British ownership of the US should also make us distinctly uncomfortable, unless of course the nation state is a shopworn and antiquated item in the global marketplace. Unevenly written and crying out for the blue pencil, *Preventing World War III* is, nonetheless, a valuable contribution to a vital national debate. (TF)

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Letter From Finland

by Arnold Beichman

No Miracles This Time

Last year, when I was in Helsinki, I made a great discovery: probably the best informed people on Soviet affairs are the Finns, whose Russian-watching goes back almost two centuries, long before the Bolshevik coup of 1917.

I was in Finland talking with veteran analysts, official and unofficial, about the overpowering Soviet military presence that has Norway, Denmark, Finland, and especially Sweden deeply worried. In Finland, where they have learned to take a cultivatedly relaxed attitude about the Soviet Union, the focus of interest was Gorbachev's reform program. One Finnish diplomat, with years of residence in the USSR, summed it up best: "All that Gorbachev is doing is trying to reform the system within the system. It simply can't be done."

That sentence said it all: the problems of the Soviet people won't be solved by de-Stalinization or some new gimmick, like re-Trotskyization. The country's socioeconomic problems can only be solved by de-Leninization — in other words, an end to the Communist Party's monopoly of everything.

The Finns are so expert about their superpower neighbor because their lessons have been learned the hard way. Finland was a czarist colony for more than a century. Its national hero, Marshal Mannerheim, who fought the Soviets to a standstill in the Winter War (1939-40), was, until Finland achieved its independence in 1917, a czarist general with an irrepressible Finnish nationalism.

Finland has a long land frontier with the USSR. She's fought two bitter and unsuccessful wars against the USSR since 1939, and there was a civil war during and after the Bolshevik Revolution. After these defeats (and pyrrhic Soviet victories), Finnish territorial losses to the Soviet Union were huge, notably the loss of the Karelian Isthmus. There is, however, no irredentist movement in Finland. Yet as I talked to Finns I was reminded of the motto of the French military after the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to the Prussian Army in 1870: *Toujours en penser, jamais en parler*, or "Always think about it; never talk about it."

Finland is a small country with big clout. Although its population is barely five million, it is ninth among the world's wealthiest nations. It has achieved this by pulling itself up by its own bootstraps after the war and in spite of heavy reparations paid to the Soviet Union until 1952. In short, Finland reached the top with no foreign economic assistance and, as older Americans may recall, Finland paid its World War I war debts to the US right on time (with no complaints), while the other European debtors defaulted.

Unlike other noncommunist European countries, Finland benefited little from US largess. This may explain why Finnish public opinion, compared to other democratic countries, is low on the hate-America scale. President Reagan was warmly received when he rested up in Helsinki before going on to Moscow for his fourth meeting with Gorbachev. There were no "Yankee, go home" posters in Helsinki streets and no anti-Reagan demos.

Finland is a constitutional democracy with an efficient market economy. In 1985, it was seventh in per capita GNP, ahead of Japan, although its inflation rate is more than double that of Japan (dinner for two in a good hotel costs $75 or more). Like its Scandinavian neighbors, Finland cherishes its political freedoms. Officially, it is a bilingual country; Swedish is the second language. English, however, is the real second language. It is spoken by nearly everybody except, perhaps, the reindeer. Given a choice of foreign languages in high school, 95 percent of the students pick English, while only a handful choose Russian.

As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, Finland is officially neutral. The Russians know, however, that its heart belongs — unreservedly — to the Western democracies, especially the United States. Neutral as it may be, Finland worries quietly but openly (as do Norway and Sweden) about Soviet intentions in the far north at the Kola peninsula. There, in nuclear bomb-proof solid rock submarine pens are docked six ICBM-armed nuclear submarines. So much for *glasnost*.

There are two Communist parties in Finland, one of them pro-Moscow and the other "Euro-Communist," but they have little importance even though in the March 1988 elections together they won almost 14 percent of the vote. They represent no significant intellectual force in a country where elite intellectual opinion is quite influential. Interestingly, while there have been serious KGB penetrations into the highest diplomatic and military circles in Norway and Sweden, Finland has been singularly free of such embarrassments.

What irritates the Finns as much as anything is the term "Finlandization," popularized some years ago by the historian Walter Laqueur. The epithet purports to describe postwar Finnish-Soviet relations that incrementally led to the loss of Finland's autonomy in foreign affairs, and that illustrate, by analogy, a danger posed to Western Europe by the Soviet Union.

Yet Finland is one country to which the term "Finlandization" does not apply — certainly not today in the aftermath of the fourth Reagan-Gorbachev summit. It is peculiar, say the Finns, that nobody ever talks about "Austrianization," i.e., the neutralization of Austria by the 1955 Austrian State Treaty underwritten by the then-occupying powers, the US, the UK, and the Soviet Union.

What cannot be overlooked, however, is that Finland has a distasteful United Nations voting record as far as the US is concerned. On a number of key resolutions, such as Afghanistan, Finland has abstained, even though the Afghanistan resolution didn't even dare cite the Soviet aggressor by name. Similarly, Finland abstained on a resolution condemning Vietnam's occupation of Cambodia. A third Finnish

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abstention vote was on the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

Even worse, in November 1983 Finland voted to condemn the US rescue operation in Grenada, even though the operation had the support of the Caribbean states. On El Salvador, Finland voted against the US and for a Soviet-backed resolution condemning human rights violations in that country. (Here I should point out that this anti-US resolution was supported by all our NATO allies, except for Britain, West Germany, and Turkey; they merely abstained.)

Still, despite these votes, I'll take Finland anytime. In the case of Finland, even pro-Soviet UN votes are only half the story. The real story about Finland is that it has fought the Soviet Union in two wars for independence. It has resisted Soviet pressures in the Khrushchev-Brezhnev era for an alliance and still does, even though these days the international atmosphere has radically altered. It's somewhat difficult for a small country to be anti-Soviet after the four Reagan-Gorbachev road shows.

In our own country we have just seen a presidential race in which, for the first time since the end of World War II, neither the Soviet Union nor Communist imperialism nor Eastern Europe's captive nations were a campaign issue for either major party or their presidential candidates. And in the House of Representatives sit more than two dozen men whose foreign policy votes consistently parallel, in every particular, the foreign policies of the Soviet Union. "Finlandization"?

On a previous trip from Moscow to Finland, my Aeroflot plane had to land at a Finnish military field, the main Helsinki airport being closed because of a labor dispute. As I disembarked on the tarmac, two camouflaged Finnish fighter jets came thundering down a runway in tandem. The roar was painful to my ears. As the planes leaped into the air, I asked a nearby Finnair guide why send up fighter jets (MIG's bought by the Finns from the Soviets) when passengers were still on the tarmac?

"Oh," said the flight attendant airily, "we always scramble a few jets whenever an Aeroflot plane comes in, sort of to remind them we're here."

Finland spends a lot of money on defense, although it doesn't show in the figures, where it appears to be no more than two percent of GNP. According to the London *Economist*, the figure is deliberately understated to keep Big Brother quiet. Finland's strategy calls for great investment in air and maritime forces. However, Finnish defense depends on its conscripted ground forces. Its security policy is well described by a recently published Foreign Ministry paper:

> It is only with ground forces that such military readiness can be reached as will prevent the country from being rapidly subdued with airborne troops and special forces attacking . . . key points. By making use of the depth of Finnish territory, it is possible to inflict casualties and loss of time on the intruder and thus make it too costly for him to launch an attack in the first place.

The nice thing about Finland is that it speaks softly and, for a small country, it carries a very big stick—one that it used so devastatingly in the 1940 war.

I am not the only American to feel this way about Finland. On this trip a group of US editors and publishers were returning to the United States after a twelve-day tour of the Soviet Union; there was little conversation in the Aeroflot passenger plane during the hop from Leningrad to Helsinki. As the Soviet plane rolled to a stop and the passengers began to descend, one of the editors said: "I never thought I'd ever repeat something by Martin Luther King enthusiastically. But I'm about to."

As his feet touched the airport walkway, the editor rolled his eyes, raised his hands skyward, and shouted out: "Free at last. Oh, God A'mighty! free at last." As several of his companions lugged their bags to Finnish customs and immigration, they took up the cry, "Free at last," out there on the ramp. The Finnish attendants grinned knowingly. It wasn't the first time they'd seen this little ceremony.

Arnold Beichman is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution. He is writing a book on Soviet treaty diplomacy since World War II.

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

E.P., Phone Home

◆

My buddy Ben is a newspaperman in Wilmington, North Carolina. Like many in his trade, Ben is a connoisseur of the grotesque and absurd, and occasionally he sends along a bundle of clippings and wire service bulletins. Last Christmas he sent me a year's

Dead captain steers old ghost ship into port
WEEKLY WORLD NEWS
CUPID'S CALLING! Man's wrong number gets him a bride
Sneak preview of blockbuster new book!
ELVIS IS ALIVE!
Horror movie scares dog to death!
The King admits his funeral was faked and tells of secret life in Michigan!
Sex-change mom begs doc: 'Turn me back into a man'
Teen marries boyfriend's grandfather
Bug-size UFO found on playground!

worth of Elvisiana, and I thought some of you might be interested. After all, a column last year about the Elvis cult elicited more mail than anything else I've written for *Chronicles* except a letter about what's wrong with the Episcopal Church. Obviously some of you care deeply about the King.

I hope, however, that you don't care as deeply as Jim Tennant, 50, of Wolverhampton, England. The *Weekly World News* (WWN) seems to have become the newspaper of record for news of Elvis, his doings, and his fans; it says that Mr. Tennant left home with his collection of 1,600 Elvis records when his wife Joan delivered a me-or-Elvis ultimatum. Tennant had announced that he was changing his name to Elvis Presley. "I've been an Elvis fan for 30 years, and that's a lot longer than I've known Joan," he said.

Speaking of immoderate middle-

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aged European fans, one Jutta Jeuthe, 46, of Hamburg, has become one of the few working female Elvis impersonators. The headline accompanying the tabloid story says "She ain't nothin' but a hound dog!" and there are photographs to prove it. The robust Miss Jeuthe, who has visited Graceland eight times and actually met the King in 1977, particularly resembles the late Elvis in torso and chins, perhaps because she eats only his favorite foods: peanut butter, hot dogs, and hamburgers.

Meanwhile, down the road in Baden-Baden, Patricia Sieler's painting of Elvis has begun to cry real tears, or at any rate what a chemist says is "a saline solution that's indistinguishable from the human tear." The painting weeps only when Miss Sieler plays her Elvis records, according to the WWN story. In fact, it cries during "Heartbreak Hotel" and stops when "Jailhouse Rock" is played.

Back in the US of A we don't have weeping pictures, but we do have all-Elvis radio stations—three of them as of last November, according to *The New York Times* News Service, one each in Ohio, Washington, and Alabama. And we lead the world in Elvis sightings.

You've heard, of course, about the sightings. Now and again since his alleged death and burial in 1977, Elvis has made his continued presence manifest to the faithful. An Atlanta barmaid, for instance, claims to have lived with him from 1978 to 1981. WWN says that forty-four-year-old Elizabeth Price now wants to write a book about the affair. She passed a polygraph test, which only means that she believed her bearded lover when he said he was Elvis, but there is also the strange tape supposedly recorded by Elvis four years after his death. In it, Elvis explains his need for privacy and his desire to get back on stage. Two hundred and seventy thousand people have paid $2.00 each to listen to the tape. That, friends, is upwards of a half-million dollars for somebody.

As I say, there have always been signs for those with eyes to see. But last year more people seemed to be seeing Elvis than Dan Quayle. The first of this new wave of sightings came in Vicksburg, Michigan, in late 1987, when a Kalamazoo housewife saw Elvis buying a fuse in Felspausch's grocery store. Louise Welling told WWN that she was speechless. "I mean you're not expecting to run into Elvis Presley in the grocery store." A couple of weeks later, Mrs. Welling saw Elvis again, this time coming out of a Kalamazoo Burger King.

Well, the scoffers had a field day, as you might suppose. A rival Vicksburg grocery store attempted to match Felspausch's publicity windfall with a sign proclaiming "Jimmy Hoffa Shops Here." This kind of Midwestern narrow-mindedness may explain why nobody else in Kalamazoo has let on to having seen Elvis. Mrs. Welling told WWN that many others have seen him, but are afraid to say so in public.

Elsewhere, though, Elvis-spotters aren't as intimidated. Two California sisters told *The National Examiner* when they saw Elvis outside the Church of Scientology in Hollywood where, unknown to them, Presley's daughter was being married. Then there's Verena Deuble of Bad Nauheim, West Germany, who says she knew Elvis when he was an American GI and showed the German press a letter sent from Memphis on October 11 in which Elvis explained that he faked his own death to escape from the rat race. The president of Elvis's German fan club suggested cautiously that the letter might be a hoax, but "handwriting experts" were said to have told the press that they are "99 percent sure" the signature is authentic.

After WWN broke the Kalamazoo story, readers wrote to say that they'd seen Elvis in a variety of places, some rather unlikely, on the face of it: outside a Las Vegas hotel where a tribute to him was in progress, shopping at a Texas department store, at a car race in Minnesota, fishing in upstate New York, on the beach in Maine, eating lunch in the California wine country, and in a bookstore in Florida.

If the idea of a bookish Elvis sounds farfetched, ponder this story, from Blacksburg, Virginia. At a college party, a fiftyish, balding, bearded man appeared. "At first I thought he was just a professor looking for a good time," one musician told WWN. But then he grabbed the mike and joined the band in "Blue Suede Shoes." When the song was over, the crowd stood stunned as the professorial Presley strolled off and vanished into the night.

Could it be that these people are just seeing Elvis imitators or look-alikes? Well, Gail Brewer-Giorgio, author of

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the book *Is Elvis Alive?*, points out that the proliferation of Elvis imitators makes it easier for Elvis to hide out. Many people who think they're looking at an imitator may actually be seeing the real thing. Think about *that*.

And stranger things have happened. Consider the final words of Ms. Brewer-Giorgio's book:

> Around the 10th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley, an Atlanta attorney who had been working in the Gary Hart campaign responded to the rumor that Gary Hart would run again with this statement: "The probability of Gary Hart seeking the nomination for president of the United States is as unlikely as believing Elvis Presley is still alive."
>
> Less than four months after this statement, Gary Hart again announced his candidacy for president of the United States.

Well, there you are. Aren't you?

I should point out that not everyone is buying the Elvis-lives theory. (Note the anagram, incidentally: ELVIS/LIVES.) Not only in Kalamazoo are skeptics to be found. A California woman is writing a book to argue that it isn't Elvis but his twin brother Jesse who is alive and being sighted. Laurel King says that Elvis told her that Jesse, who is supposed to have died at birth, was actually hidden with an aunt after he was found to be retarded. Ms. King says she met Jesse at Graceland in 1973, and he looked just like Elvis but "didn't seem to have the intelligence that Elvis had." It's a thought.

Meanwhile, evangelist Rick Stanley, Elvis's stepbrother (his mother married Elvis's father after the death of Elvis's mother), scoffs at the notion that Elvis may still be alive. (As an orthodox Protestant Christian, of course, he also rejects the possibility of apparitions.) But he told WWN last October that he owes his conversion to Elvis. He was just your average drug addict, long-haired hippie, and hanger-on in the Presley entourage when Elvis left us, showing him by example how empty worldly success could be. "Elvis wasn't content," says Stanley. "He was caught in a trap." (Wasn't there a song about that?)

Others claim to have been helped more directly by the deceased. One seventeen-year-old cancer victim from Warrenville, Illinois, told WWN that "I'm alive today by the grace of the Lord and with a lot of help from Elvis," and drag-racer Marion "Tinker" Gladden of Salisbury, Maryland, told *The Sun* that Elvis "is up there in heaven right now talking to me and other people like me who care so deeply about him." "When I have a problem," Gladden said, "I ask God for guidance and He hands me over to Elvis, who is one of God's right-hand men. Like all angels [!], Elvis inspires people." Gladden's theology may be a little unsound, but he has a theory about why so many people believe Elvis is still alive on earth: they've been fooled by his "vibrations." Elvis is talking to them, "but they don't know where the vibrations are coming from. The vibes are so powerful that folks figure he must be alive in the flesh."

I should point out that some of those who don't believe Elvis is still among us believe much stranger things. Consider, for instance, an Indiana medium named Diana of the Dunes. According to *The Star*, when Diana last spoke with Elvis, he told her he was happy, but that he had decided to be reincarnated as a baby boy named Vernon (his daddy's name, of course). This will be a sign unto you, says Diana: the baby's first words will not be "mama" or "dada," but "shook up."

Getting back to the question of who — or what — is buried in Elvis's tomb, however, another psychic says that question will soon be settled once and for all. Janos Szabo told *The Sun* that there's going to be this big earthquake in the Memphis area, see, and hundreds will die, and the tomb at Graceland will open, and . . . its contents will be revealed. Sometime before the year 2000.

Maybe that's OK for those who can wait, but the rest of us want to know *now*. What's going on? Is the King still alive? Well, when 50,000 Americans paid fifty cents each to vote on the subject in one of those dumb telephone polls, they decided that he was, by a two to one margin. I doubt that we could get two thirds of 50,000 Americans to pay fifty cents to attest that, say, George Bush is alive. Make of that what you will. I call it another nail in the coffin of the case for universal suffrage.

I find that I'm reluctant to say how I'd have voted, if only because those who believe that Elvis walks the earth today are zealous in their belief. Ann Landers lived to regret a column in which she supported the official story that Elvis was buried at Graceland in 1977. Last October she printed a sample from the flood of protesting letters that came in, and *I don't want to hear from you people*, understand? But I have to say, frankly, that I think it's more likely that the casket buried at Graceland contained all that was mortal of Elvis Presley than that Lee Harvey Oswald acted alone, or that the man from Avon wrote Shakespeare's plays.

True, the success of grocery-store tabloids like *Weekly World News*, *The Sun*, *The Star*, and *The National Examiner* should occasion second thoughts not just about universal suffrage but about universal literacy. But I think our fellow-citizens are better served by stories like the one headlined "Statue of Elvis Found on Mars" (I didn't make that up, honest) than by the columns of Tom Wicker or the opinions of Justice Brennan. And when it comes to Elvis, the tabloids are sort of like *USA Today* gone mad, just peddling good news, in this case the good news that the King may actually still be among us — middle-aged, balding, bearded, off drugs but still fighting a weight problem — like one of us, you know?

John Shelton Reed — middle-aged, bald, bearded, and overweight — writes from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and promises that this will be his last letter about Elvis.

Letter From the Heartland

by Jane Greer

A Prophet in His Own Country

◆

It took millennia for North Dakota soil to acquire what nutrients it has (and they're substantial) in the Red River Valley along the eastern border, the

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silt-rich bottom of huge prehistoric Lake Agassiz. It took only a hundred years or so for man to nearly deplete it.

And now John Gardner, a North Dakota agronomist, is telling Great Plains farmers from Saskatchewan to Texas how to rescue their most valuable resource. What he says is basic and sensible enough to make farmers blush. But will they listen?

Gardner, superintendent of North Dakota State University's research and extension center in Carrington, calls his goal "sustainable agriculture." Farmers have been frustrated for decades, he says, with no clear path in sight, no promise of relief from the ever-increasing demand for vigilance and effort. Farmers don't burn out and sell out only for financial reasons: they also simply get *worn out*, with worry and work. And that's because they've wound themselves into a spiral of artificiality.

Gardner urges farmers to look at the *long* run, to weigh economics and the environment against each other, and to consider the whole ecosystem. He cautions farmers to stop "recreational" or unnecessary tillage, to stop continuous planting of *any* species, and to know economic thresholds for weeds ("Farmers today no longer *understand*

how many weeds it takes to hurt a corn crop. Today, whether there's one weed or a hundred, they're weeds, and they've got to go"). He would like to see government farm programs become more flexible in allowing nonprogram crops. And he's also engaged in more exotic experiments: with shallow tillage, livestock-intensive farming, multiple crop systems (for instance, planting flax with wheat, harvesting them at the same time, and separating them later, or planting soybeans in wheat and harvesting them separately), and perennial wheat and legumes.

Much of this seems like plain old common sense, things that should have been tried *decades* ago in a part of the country where the family farmer battles daily to, literally, hang on to his turf. Even when it rains on the plains, farming is hard. So why aren't Gardner's recommendations common practice?

"Well, it's complex," he says, unwilling to blame any party. "The ag situation that we're in right now is a function of a lot of factors: social, economic, and political. Before the 30's, we plowed everything black—and not just in the Red River Valley, but all over. It was kind of the Russian approach, where we thought one management scheme would work everywhere.

"We had some dry years in the 30's, our soil started to blow away, and all at once—all of a sudden—we realized that we need soil conservation.

"During World War II there was a lot of experimenting with chemicals." (2,4-D, one of the first herbicides, came out of World War II.) "And after the war we discovered that, hey, we can replace some of our *tillage* with some of these *chemicals*." The soil conservation learned at such a cost during the Dust Bowl was rapidly unlearned. Farmers got careless with their practices.

"Unfortunately, at that time we made a choice. We didn't know we were making one, but we were. We dropped the study of biology for 30 years and went whole-hog into chemistry. That's when we became very dependent on fertilizers, especially since we had 'mined' all the nitrogen and other nutrients out of the soil.

"Then, in the 70's, there was what seemed to be a world food shortage. There were incentives to raise as much food as possible. And we started telling our farmers, 'We don't want you standing around with a pitchfork, raising hogs and cattle and chickens and being a part of the ecosystem. That's old-fashioned. What you need to do is bulldoze the barn and plant wheat.' We had experts who told us that what worked in business would also work best in farming—and business was streamlined and capital-intensive.

"We created a big problem for ourselves. Now North Dakota, for instance, probably has the capability to grow more different kinds of crops than many other states, but we *don't*. We have a lot of guys who are in a government program that tells them they have to plant wheat, so they plant wheat. Our farm program and our farm practices aren't built on an understanding of the farm process, but on products. Commodities. None of these factors would have been so bad by itself—using fertilizer in itself isn't bad, streamlining in itself isn't bad—but together they were terrible for farming."

What plains farmers need to learn fast, says Gardner, is that "there's something that's a lot better than streamlining, and that's diversification. Nature is successful, sustainable, and stable because it's diverse."

He's reminded that a lot of farmers have come to be completely dependent on government farm programs. Is he recommending that they see the light and wean themselves individually, or would he like the government's help in changing farming habits?

He laughs. "Ten years down the road there probably won't *be* any government programs. Wouldn't it be nice if during the intervening years the government encouraged good farming habits instead of discouraging them? On the other hand, some very good arguments have been made that American farming will never be able to support itself in a free market, that subsidies are necessary. That's the way the Europeans do it. They say, 'We value the agrarian way of life, so we're going to subsidize farms.'" Either way, he says, the government should encourage the right kind of farming.

From a purely biological point of view—Gardner isn't interested in getting into the politics or the sociology of farming—are small family farms better than large farms? "The most effective system would be a moderately-sized farm. What's important is that the farmer has a stake in the ownership. There's something distinctly different in the kind of decisions made by a farmer who hopes to pass the farm on to his children and their children, and a guy who comes in and is paid $5 an hour to make decisions.

"But I'd go one step further and say that the farmer is part of the ecosystem. He and all the crops he plants and all the animals he raises are part of the system. And a farmer who has ownership in his decisions is going to understand that better than one who doesn't."

Jane Greer edits Plains Poetry Journal. *She lives in Bismarck.*

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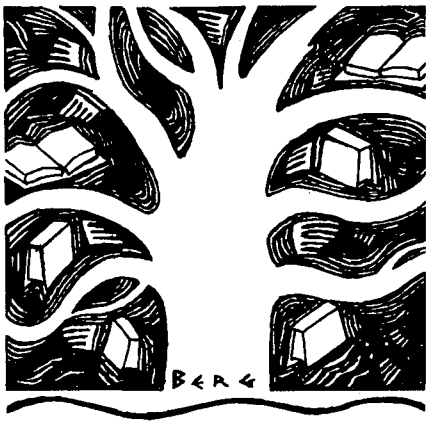

Jeanne Berg

Defining Life

by Steven Goldberg

The morality of abortion is entirely a matter of definition: is the fetus a person or not? The definition—whether derived from millennia of religious tradition or from individual analysis and subjective choice—both generates and justifies the intense emotions that are given free rein when fact is irrelevant.

There is no logical or empirical way to demonstrate the superiority of either definition, that of the fetus as a person or as a nonperson. Nor is there any way to demonstrate the superiority of either of the impulses that lie behind them—a tradition-rooted identification with the fetus; or an identification with the pregnant woman, defended analytically and pragmatically. These differences manifest themselves in different premises, each of which is both impervious to attack and incapable of logically or scientifically persuading the other side. Nonetheless, once you accept one of the definitions, you are committed to a specific position on the permissibility of abortion.

Let us assume that no one is willing to argue for the routine killing of normal, innocent persons. Then, if the fetus is defined as a person, there is nothing more to say. Abortion, so defined, is an extermination of persons, one that would (morally, though perhaps not legally) justify almost any response capable of stopping a massacre.

If, on the other hand, the fetus is defined as a nonperson, there is nothing more to say. Abortion, so defined, is a purely personal act that would (morally, though perhaps not legally) justify almost any response capable of stopping an intolerable intrusion on personal freedom.

The various attempts to get around the problem of definition all fail on the grounds of irrelevance. *If* the law defines the fetus as a person, *then* a law outlawing abortion is no more a law codifying "a matter of religion" than is the law against murder the same as "Thou shalt not kill." From a legal viewpoint, an act is "a matter of religion" only to the extent that it is not a "matter of law."

A law outlawing abortion is no more a law against a private decision than is a law preventing a slaveholder from defining a black man as a nonperson one against a "private decision" of the slaveholder; a decision is "a private decision" or "a matter of conscience" only to the extent that it is legal.

Of course, a "legal illegality" is a contradiction in terms, whether the supposed mitigating consideration be privacy or conscience. An act can, of course, be moral but illegal, but the act cannot be defended in terms of legality. This is true even when, as in the cases of conscientious objectors, and rape victims who want an abortion, the law recognizes exceptions. To the extent that the law recognizes an exception, there is no conflict; to the extent that the law does not recognize an exception, the law cannot, by definition, recognize the exception.

A law against abortion is not a legal infringement of "a woman's right to her own body" because an abortion law recognizes no such right; if it did it would be a self-negating law. Moreover, even on a moral level, the concept of "a woman's right to her own body" is merely obfuscatory; assuming that the right of normal, innocent persons to live takes precedence over any noncapital right, "a woman's right to her own body" supposes the fetus to be a nonperson, in which case neither "a woman's right to her own body" nor any other justification for abortion is required.

The mutilation of pregnant women and other horrors associated with illegal abortion are capable of nauseating anyone worthy of being called "human"; they are not, however, capable of justifying abortion when the fetus is defined as a person. For—assuming the easily-demonstrated fact that the total of women and fetuses killed when abortion is legal is far greater than when abortion is illegal—even the horrors of illegal abortion cannot justify what is, to one who defines the fetus as a person, murder on a much greater scale.

There are many powerful, pragmatic arguments for the legalization of abortion (for example, those concerned with overpopulation). Howev-

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er, even these are incapable of overcoming the problem of definition; to one who defines the fetus as a person, pragmatic considerations no more justify abortion than they justify infanticide. To one who defines the fetus as nonhuman, no moral justification is needed. Incidentally, it is not true that legalization of abortion would be less complicated if only those intimately involved—i.e., women—were to decide the issue. The overwhelming number of surveys on abortion indicate either that men favor legalization *more*, or that there is no statistical difference in the attitudes of the sexes. Indeed, this is what one would expect if one is guided by observation, rather than ideology; when an unmarried woman gets pregnant, more often it is her sexual partner who wants her to get an abortion. But even if women did favor abortion more strongly, this would be irrelevant to the validity of any argument or position.

One wishes that science could help solve the moral and legal questions. But it is in the nature of science and of moral and legal questions that science cannot help here. Science can (to an extent) determine the empirical properties of the fetus: at what age brain activity begins, at what point sentience becomes possible, when the fetus can survive if removed from the pregnant woman, and the like. But science cannot comment on whether any given property meets the (inherently subjective) definition of person. If one person believes that being a "person" begins at conception, another when brain activity begins, a third at the point of sentience, and a fourth with the capability of independent survival, of what use is scientific evidence?

No one likes the fact that the most important of all moral issues is unsolvable. But whatever one might like or dislike, all moral questions are, like this one, unsolvable once one has cleared away all fallacy and error, exposing the root subjective disagreement of emotions and values and the difference of definition they generate. The question of abortion cannot be solved. It can merely be settled, by force or by its modern equivalent—democratic vote.

Steven Goldberg is a professor of philosophy at City College, New York.

LAW

Jeanne Berg

Crime and Capital Punishment

by Betsy Clarke

"Missouri doesn't have a death penalty," a former prosecutor remarked to me last Christmas. He was wrong, as he well knew. The Revised Statutes of Missouri specifically allow for capital punishment. But as a practical matter, the man was right. At the time he spoke, Missouri had not put a person to death since 1965, even though around 65 persons reside on the state's death row. In January, however, George "Tiny" Mercer came to rest at last on a gurney in the nondescript surroundings of a Jefferson City prison. He was the first person this state has executed by lethal injection, and the first person Missouri has executed in more than 20 years. Mercer had survived on death row for almost a decade. Prison officials had prepared to execute certain inmates four other times between October and January, to no avail; the rest of the condemned have managed to stay alive with strategically filed appeals, writs, motions, and so forth.

Pro-death penalty forces may reasonably wonder what the point is of bothering with death penalty statutes. Execution is too infrequent to be a deterrent to others, and too distant from the crime itself to seem retributive or principled. Only 11 criminals were executed in 1988, though more than two thousand are condemned to death. Furthermore, US Supreme Court decisions indicate the situation will not change.

Nonetheless, these statutes have benefits that are often overlooked—benefits that even anti-death penalty partisans should acknowledge. These statutes streamline the administration of justice and keep dangerous criminals off the streets longer than would be likely without them. The reason? Death statutes encourage guilty pleas and other deals. Though casual with the lives of others, murderers have a great fear for their own. Therefore, they sometimes plead guilty to the most serious charges to save their lives. Just recently, Robert Berdella, a homosexual mass murderer in Kansas City, pleaded guilty to six homicides in exchange for his life. He will never be paroled. Another Missourian pleaded guilty to two murders to avoid his execution, and received life in prison without parole as well. Both plea bargains were reached under the specter

LIBERAL ARTS

ON PUNISHMENT

As he went through Cold-Bath Fields he saw
a solitary cell;
And the Devil was pleased, for it gave him a hint
for improving his prisons in Hell
—*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

Men are not hang'd for stealing horses, but that horses may not be stolen. Whenever a knave is not punished, an honest man is laughed at.
—*Halifax*

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of the death sentence, even though at the time Missouri had not put a person to death in nearly a quarter of a century. Significantly, the latter had professed his innocence until the death-qualified jury was actually in place. Deals may also include agreements by the criminals to testify against comrades. Obviously, the death statutes have clout even when they are not used for their intended purpose.

Obviously also, a prosecutor without the death penalty backing him has less to bargain with. In states without a death penalty, perpetrators of grisly murders are more likely to go to trial or plea bargain for much less proportionate punishment. Trial means expending untold sums and energy, risking reversible trial error, and fretting over witness and jury unpredictability, in order, if the state is lucky, to get the results Missouri got more easily in the cases mentioned above.

The outcome in the Missouri cases has its unsatisfactory side. The evidence suggests that both murderers not only killed for thrills but tortured as well, and the state had reliable witnesses who were willing to say so. The death sentence for these men, assuming a trial with no surprises, was an absolute certainty. Now these criminals can be expected to live a long life at the taxpayers' expense. But such was probably the case even if these criminals had been sentenced to death.

Why, then, does the mere existence of these statutes set off the anti-death penalty crowd like nothing else? In my limited experience, the answer is that some people are uncomfortable with the notion of *any* type of serious punishment for the violent, especially life prison terms. These are the people who write letters to the editor of their local paper reminding us that most murderers were abused as children and economically deprived. Maybe. Maybe not. It has been my observation that most violent criminals are compulsive liars, in addition to everything else.

Some lawyers will describe their clients as victims of circumstances—given too easy access to alcohol and weapons at the same time, for example. These lawyers indicate further that they blame the prison environment for the ever-apparent deficiencies in their clients' characters. Recently, I was describing to a public defender the utter depravity of one of my clients, who is seeking post-conviction relief. This lawyer opposes the death penalty and, judging from her lapel button, favors peace and justice in Central America. She told me that my point of view was understandable, but that I must realize that post-conviction relief clients have been in a poisoned environment for a while and that the prison experience is the cause of their appalling nastiness. "When they first get to prison, they're really nice," she said. "Even murderers are nice."

Betsy Clarke is a public defender in Columbia, Missouri.

LETTERS

Jeanne Berg

Writing in the Tolstoy Tradition

by Sally S. Wright

"I always wanted to be a writer. I can remember the first book I ever wrote when I was very little. I wrote the title and the index, but I didn't actually get 'round to the contents." Nikolai Tolstoy laughs and leans back, trying to fit his extremely long legs under my dining room table.

Count Nikolai Tolstoy, who considers himself a Celtic scholar whose specialty is the study of Merlin, was in this country to receive an award from the USIC Educational Foundation in Washington in recognition of that part of his writing that examines the forced repatriation of Russian soldiers at the end of World War II.

He's an extremely tall fifty-three-year-old Russian émigré, born and raised in England, who never heard the Revolution mentioned in his own home and has ambivalent views about aristocrats. He's a countryman whose chickens escape and whose roof leaks, who keeps donkeys that have been left in his paddock, and enjoys the occasional sword fight with his small son. He ran into Tintern Abbey the last time he tried to drive. He laughs easily, and talked to me for four days without avoiding a question.

When I asked how he felt about aristocrats, he said, "In my personal case, I think it's a great advantage because, being obsessed by history, one knows so much more about one's ancestors, and it makes one feel in some way very much part of that unfolding process.

"But as a political institution, I have very ambivalent views. A code of honor, it seems to me, is really part of the definition of an aristocracy. Hereditary titles are all very well, but that's just a name. And I have very mixed feelings in England, where too many of the aristocracy (and they vary greatly) are people simply living on their name and what inherited wealth they've got. I feel extremely hostile to the youth of a privileged class which abuses that privilege and arrogantly exalts things which, in fact, they never earned and would be incapable of earning themselves. Indeed, all the more duty do you have, and the higher expectation of what you should set out to achieve, because you've started off with so great an advantage."

His grandfather was Leo Tolstoy's cousin, and although Nikolai considers *War and Peace* "one of the most extraordinary literary achievements ever written," he also finds "the philosophy of history as expressed in the book unconvincing and artificial." And unlike most writers, he thinks "one of the curses of literature in the 20th century is the enormous prestige which is placed on the artist and the writer."

His own writing has taken a circuitous route that started when he was a very small boy being shuffled from one boarding school to another during the Blitz, when there was reason to lose himself in the pleasures of historical novels. They remained "a serious absorption" until he was at least 20,

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The Toledo Blade

Merlin scholar Nikolai Tolstoy will soon go to trial to defend charges he has made that the Macmillan government participated in atrocities in Austria in 1945.

although they became increasingly dissatisfying. "So then I began to read history. And I went to the other extreme — the more footnotes per page, the happier I was. But when I was reading these works and doing this scholarship, which still delights me, and is my major delight, I can see that I was in a way writing my own historical novel, because in my mind pictures formed of the past."

Tolstoy pursued Celtic studies at Trinity College, Dublin (learning Welsh and Irish to study the early sources), and it was then that he began writing a book on 5th- and 6th-century Britain. "My great work, as it was supposed to be, was started when I was still at university. It was going to be the mightiest novel of all time, but it was very bad." He worked on it for years until "this manuscript, which was a sort of summation of everything I'd worked for, was literally burnt in a fire," when his 17th-century Welsh farmhouse burned to the ground. "That was almost God taking me by the hand and saying, 'Everything you're doing is wrong. It's not wrong that you wish to do this thing, but you are going about it in the wrong way.' All that was saved were the source books I had to have to work on it again. But in essence it destroyed what needed destroying and set me up again, which was astonishing.

"And then really by chance I was caught up into this business of forced repatriation." At the end of World War II, thousands of Soviet citizens fled the Soviet Union, only to be forced back by the British and Americans as a result of the Yalta agreement. The repatriates were then exterminated or sent to Soviet labor camps. "The material was absolutely fascinating, but when the book was finished it was very bad. It was written in a grotesquely intemperate style, because I was so agitated about the subject. But I luckily had a very good editor and he just told me, 'You've got to reduce this book about a third.' I was furious at the time, but I somehow did it. Then luckily the book (*Victims of Yalta*) was so successful, that then I was suddenly in at the deep end, and had no problem finding publishers."

He wrote a biography of Thomas Pitt and several other books on the Soviet Union, but, he says, "At the time, I wasn't satisfied with what I was doing." And then he wrote *The Tolstoys: Twenty-Four Generations of Russian History.*

His is no ordinary family. The records start in the 14th century, but "tolstoy" (which means "fat") wasn't used till the 15th, when a Muscovite prince awarded it as a nickname.

In 1718, Privy Councillor Peter Tolstoy was compelled by Tsar Peter the Great to arrange the secret death of the tsar's son, Aleksey, who cursed the Tolstoy family to the 25th generation, saying there would be madmen and idiots in every generation as well as individuals of exceptional ability.

Certainly it's been an unusually energetic and eccentric family. One revered Tolstoy general went into battle in the Napoleonic wars accompanied by three fully-grown pet bears, which also ate at his table and traveled in a carriage.

Fyodor Ivanovitch Tolstoy had himself tattooed from head to foot on a Pacific island (where he trained the king to crawl at his side and rush into the ocean after a stick whenever he cried "Fetch!"). When he began inciting the ship's crew to mutiny, the captain abandoned him on a deserted island, where he became lost, but had a vision of St. Spyridon which directed him to safety. Years later, he attracted a ship, walked across Siberia, and took up his career again in Moscow as a duelist and card cheat. He distinguished himself in two wars, married the gypsy mistress who'd kept him from killing himself over his gambling debts, became extremely devout, and finally stopped cheating at cards. His children died at an alarming rate, and he took to carrying a list of the 11 men he'd killed in duels, so that as each child died at birth or in infancy, he crossed off a name and wrote "quits." When the eleventh child died and the twelfth was born, he said, "Now, thank God, my little gypsy maid can live." Which she did, unlike the rest.

Other Tolstoys were less flamboyant, becoming state councillors and governors and cabinet ministers, while one was the greatest painter of his generation. Aleksey Konstantinovich was a lyric poet and playwright who drove nails into walls with his palms, while his cousin, Lev Nikolayevich (whom we know as Leo) could lift 180 pounds with one hand.

Like many Tolstoys, Leo, the author of *War and Peace, Anna Karenina,* and *The Cossacks,* was driven by intense sexual desire, and while he came to endorse celibacy as the enlightened path, he couldn't live by his precepts, bestowing 13 children on his long-suffering wife. He ultimately rejected material possessions and all the institutions of man, developing his own idiosyncratic interpretation of the Bible and living on his country estate as much like his peasants as possible.

His cousin was raised totally apart from the family, and yet Aleksey Nikolayevich came to be revered for his noble antecedents. Even Stalin called his pet aristocrat "Count," perhaps in appreciation of the literary underpinnings A.N. provided the Revolution in the 30's and 40's. He became an art collector and gourmand, who entertained lavishly in his Moscow and Leningrad mansions as well as the country estates the party also provided, and who exhorted all Russians to die

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rather than surrender to the Nazis—as his chauffeur packed his paintings and drove him to the safety of Tashkent.

The rest of the Tolstoys had long since been killed, imprisoned, or exiled. Nikolai's father had escaped as a boy, after having been chased by the Cheka from Kazan to Moscow, where his English nurse, with the help of an English Anglican priest, smuggled him out as a British citizen.

"Even now, my father doesn't speak about it. I think it had some traumatic effect upon him. And so I can remember when I first heard about the Revolution, which was when a boy at my school told me about Red and White Russians. But I don't think that had very much effect on me straight away. I was always very touched and attracted to the old Russia, from seeing it around me in the homes of relatives we visited. But the political context of it I more or less learned as a later thing. In a funny way, it seems to have made me feel more intensively about these things. It's a whole society and civilization that's really vanished now, and the very few survivors will soon be dead, and so I felt very great interest. But I think my circumstances have been lucky for me, that I'm able to look at Russia, and admire, and be enthralled by things, but to do it at a distance."

It was because of his interest in Russia (and the number of mouths he has to feed in his own family) that Nikolai wrote several books on Soviet society early in his career. But when his editor gave him an opportunity to write for pleasure, he wrote a scholarly investigation called *The Quest for Merlin*, in which he traces every known historical reference to Merlin. The scholarship gets extremely complicated, the simplified version being that Merlin was a Welsh bard who lived in the 6th century. The early Welsh believed that he prophesied the fortunes and the kings of Britain and influenced the land's destiny much the way Prospero oversees his island in *The Tempest*. Merlin's king was not called Arthur, but Gwenddolau, and when he died in battle in 573, Merlin became mad with grief and fled to the Forest of Caledonia north of Hadrian's wall.

Even after Tolstoy had finished his scholarly book, he was still fascinated by Merlin. "I'd gone as far as I could go pursuing these sources, and three people will read it, and I don't know that it gets you anywhere. So suddenly I said, 'Why not instead of that, sit down and write what I actually think took place?' Although I'd come to think of an historical novel as a sort of watered-down version of the real thing."

And yet now, having written *The Coming of the King* (which will be published this month in America by Bantam) as the first in a trilogy of Merlin novels, and having found the process fascinating, Tolstoy doesn't plan to write nonfiction in the future.

"I entered on this rather desperate venture quite recently. The poor Tolstoy household was financially in very bad straits indeed, but I thought if I don't write it now I never will, and I sat down and wrote what claimed to be the autobiography of Merlin. There was no more money coming in at this stage, and there had been a certain interview with the bank manager which had been very polite and friendly, but had, for me, grim undertones. But then the American publishers offered an unbelievable sum, for us, which in the end, I think, with hard work, will get us out of it all.

"The whole basis is the historical Merlin in the context of the 6th century, and it's actually a very fascinating period with many lessons for our own time—not the least of which is that many people who lament the age in which we live might do worse than to look back to the 6th century, and indeed might find an age not very dissimilar to our own. Those who go 'round with long faces explaining that they're living under the shadow of the bomb, for instance, might like to see what it was like to live under the shadow of the bubonic plague. As far as I can see, it was very much worse. It was a time when a whole civilized society seemed to be breaking up and where there were just small heroic groups of people attempting to preserve something of civilization. I hope in the form of a novel that these messages can be brought to a much wider and a different audience than that which I would gain by continuing to bore my fellow Celtic scholars at the Universities of Cardiff and Edinburgh.

"Of course the 6th century was a time when Christianity was becoming established in Britain, but paganism, as I believe, was still flourishing. So a great deal of the book is about the Roman Empire, and I hope that people will realize what we can gain out of an understanding of the only civilization with close similarities to our own, that rose and fell and disappeared, which we can stand back and study. Yet this is being cut off by our modern education, and in fact the whole past really will be a closed book one day. We'll be like people who suddenly have amnesia, who have to start their lives from scratch. There's a feeling today that we've nothing to learn from the past. John Dewey actually said, 'No one should read any book written before 1900.' Yet there's also an unconscious fear and hatred of the past, especially in the field of education, because it does show up the littleness and the frivolity of what intellectuals are doing. The chattering that goes on in New York and London over candles at dinner—set it in the larger perspective, and you see it straight away for what it is."

Tolstoy is now working on the second volume of his Merlin trilogy, but not without the distraction of preparing for a libel suit. For in early 1987, based on his 1986 book, *The Minister and the Massacres*, Tolstoy wrote a circular that was widely distributed by Nigel Watts. This pamphlet outlined the actions initiated by Harold Macmillan and carried out by Lord Aldington (formerly Brigadier Toby Low) in Austria in 1945, which doomed tens of thousands of non-Soviet citizens—Cossacks, White Russians, Slovenes, Croats, and Serbs, including women and children—who "either died a lingering death in Soviet forced labour camps, or were slaughtered in circumstances of appalling brutality by Titoist execution squads."

No action of any kind had been undertaken against Tolstoy by Macmillan's family or Lord Aldington in connection with Tolstoy's book, but Aldington brought a libel suit against Mr. Watts for distributing the circular. And Tolstoy then felt honor bound to include himself as a defendant.

The trial begins June 6 and has already attracted considerable attention in the British press. Last fall an "independent commission" investigated the Austrian atrocities and published findings that largely exonerate Mac-

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millan and incriminate Lord Aldington. Tolstoy has been informed by a friend in British intelligence that this was not an "independent" commission at all, but one arranged by Sir Robert Armstrong, recently retired cabinet secretary. Tolstoy suspects that the government wishes to preserve the former Conservative prime minister's reputation, and says the materials have been mishandled by the commission (even though they strengthen the case against Aldington) and will be easily refutable, should they be introduced at the trial.

In spite of the pressures of public scrutiny, Tolstoy is grateful for the notoriety. For although he already had the testimony and support of many former British military personnel who observed, or were forced to participate in, the atrocities in Austria, many more have come forward, along with members of the victims' families and a handful of survivors, who would not have known of his work without the public exposure. "As much significant material has come to light since the publication of my book as before," and he believes the commitment of his supporters all over the world has deepened accordingly. He told me how he'd just received an anonymously donated five-pound Australian note with "God bless you" written on the card in Ukrainian.

"This trial is the only way to bring the reality of these massacres home to public understanding. And we hope, if the funds hold out, to bring a great number of witnesses, in order to imprint it on the record and the public consciousness."

The legal expenses are, in fact, a source of serious concern. While Lord Aldington is a man of considerable means, Tolstoy is not able to assume his legal costs himself, and a charitable organization, the Forced Repatriation Defense Fund, has been set up by his supporters to assist him.

Fortunately for Tolstoy, *The Coming of the King* spent two months on the British best-sellers list.

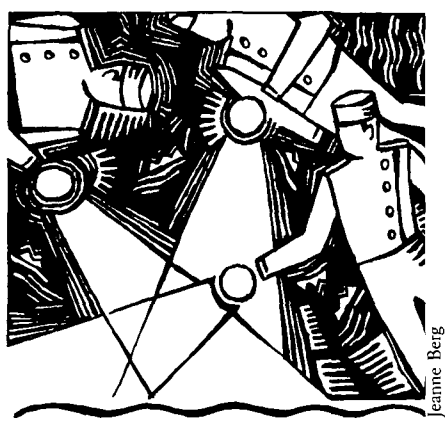
Nikolai Tolstoy has come full circle, from a fiction manuscript that was destroyed in a fire, through years of scholarly research on England and Russia, only to return to fiction that couldn't have been written without a lifetime of study.

"If my first books, which I'd set my heart on, had been published, not only would I have become arrogant and conceited, but that arrogance would have led me to write more books of the same sort. It would not have forced me to come to terms with myself, to find very slowly and painfully what I was capable of, and ought to be doing. A lot of achievement in writing is doing things and having them destroyed, but it's really a regenerative process. I think we really need tempering in life. And we just have to go on working.

"But I do love the exercise of trying to slip into another age, as much as you possibly can."

Sally S. Wright lives in Bowling Green, Ohio.

FILM



Jeanne Berg

Caution: Historical Revisionism at Work

by Arthur M. Eckstein

"He who controls the past controls the future." Nowhere is Big Brother's *dictum* truer than in the case of Vietnam and the antiwar movement. Lately, one can detect a new and persistent attempt to remold the history and goals of the antiwar movement in a way designed to make it more acceptable to the mass of the American people. And obviously, how one is taught to view the movement as it was in the 60's will help determine how one ought to view various movement efforts of the 80's: the encouragement of a nuclear freeze, for instance, or the fierce support for Commandante Ortega's Nicaragua. Hollywood, of course, has always sentimentalized the radicals of the 60's: the outrageous *Running on Empty* (1988), with its warm, fatherly and motherly ex-bomb throwers still (for some reason) pursued by a harsh and unbending government, is only the latest in a long string of ideological epics that stretches back to *Alice's Restaurant* (1969) and *Zabriskie Point* (1970). But what is particularly at issue here is not the romanticizing of radicalism. Rather, it is the denial of the *existence* of radicalism, radical ideas, and radical goals among the movement in the first place.

As far as I am aware, this new tack was first taken by Stanley Kauffman, in his review of *The Hanoi Hilton* for *The New Republic* in March 1987. Kauffman bitterly objected to the depiction of representatives of the antiwar movement in that movie: the movement wasn't sympathetic to the North Vietnamese (as it is portrayed in the film), didn't idealize them, didn't see them as angels. The mass of antiwar marchers, Kauffman insisted, had no opinion one way or the other about the Hanoi regime: they simply wanted the war to end, they wanted to "bring the boys home." In that sense, they were, if anything, *sympathetic* to our soldiers in Vietnam. This same theme—that the antiwar movement was basically patriotic in its goals—recently appeared again in Curtis Gans' review of an excellent new book of memoirs from disillusioned movement people such as Peter Collier, David Horowitz, and Carol Iannone: *Political Passages: Journeys of Change Through Two Decades, 1968-1988*, edited by John H. Bunzel. Writing in *The Washington Post* (July 24, 1988), Gans insisted that the authors of these memoirs had a fundamentally misguided view of the movement: the movement did not consist of sympathizers with the North Vietnamese, such people constituted a mere "handful"; and meanwhile "the millions of patriotic Americans" who actually made up the movement are ignored in the book. The same point is pushed by Kauffman. Oh yes, he says, there were a "few" people in the movement who dressed in Vietcong

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black pajamas, burned American flags, and wanted the North Vietnamese to win; but to concentrate one's attention on such people misses the attitude of the vast majority of demonstrators and marchers.

Misses, that is, the dupes (I speak as one of the duped). Both Kauffman and Gans argue that sympathizers with Hanoi were only an infinitesimal and unimportant part of the movement. There is, I suppose, something to this, in that the actual numbers of such people were (relatively) small—though to tell the truth, I really don't remember seeing very many waving American flags at the antiwar demonstrations *I* attended. *But*: what was important about the Communist sympathizers was not how many they were but *who* they were. They were the intellectual and political *leadership* of the movement. Both Kauffman and Gans need to face the fact that the intellectual and political leaders of the antiwar movement—the type of people who, as in the film, visited Hanoi—*were* firmly on the side of the North Vietnamese, *did* idealize and sanctify them, *did* see North Vietnamese society as angelic (as they saw America as satanic). Kauffman and Gans may be uncomfortable with this, and they may try to obfuscate the implications of this, but there is plenty of evidence to show that both *The Hanoi Hilton* and *Political Passages* hit the nail right on the head.

During the war, the following central figures of the antiwar movement visited North Vietnam and brought back absolutely glowing accounts of its leaders, its society, and/or the way it treated American prisoners of war: Ramsey Clark (North Vietnam characterized as a country of total spiritual unity); Susan Sontag (North Vietnam a country of love); Mary McCarthy (a humane leadership, greatly concerned about the welfare of American prisoners); William Sloane Coffin (a humane, gentle, compassionate leadership—plus great good humor, too!); Daniel Berrigan (a country characterized above all by "a naive faith in human goodness"); Tom Hayden (a country characterized by deep humanity, and also by "poetry and music"); Jane Fonda (a leadership compassionate toward American prisoners, who, for their part, were "liars and hypocrites"); Staughton Lynd (a country of "humane socialism, socialism with a heart"—indeed, this was the specifically Vietnamese contribution to the world socialist movement). One may add Noam Chomsky, who never visited the North, but wrote in 1973 that it was the most genuinely popular system in the entire world, a just system, and a rewarding one.

In his attack on *The Hanoi Hilton*, Kauffman remarked that such idealization of the North would have been "sickeningly grotesque" especially after 1975, because of the terrible consequences of the Communist victory for the condition of the Vietnamese people. I fully agree. But Kauffman clearly means to suggest that because such idealization was "sickeningly grotesque" it did not occur, or if it did occur it was only of very minor importance. Once again, he is wrong. The panegyrics of the North *did* continue after 1975; they came from very prominent people; in fact, they came from the heart of the antiwar leadership.

Thus George McGovern, visiting the South in 1976, found a moderate and humane government, far less dictatorial than the old Thieu regime. He found no signs of oppression, no signs even of secret police. In 1977 Richard Falk, Richard Barnet, David Dellinger, Corliss Lamont, Paul Sweezy, and Cora Weiss praised the Vietnamese government for its spirit of moderation, and its extraordinary efforts towards reconciliation (!) with its people. Two years later, in 1979, they went further and declared that "Vietnam now enjoys human rights as it has never known in its history." Dellinger, in his most recent book on Vietnam (1986), *still* praises the regime's human rights policies.

This group of people and their ideas were not insignificant, nor somewhere out on the fringes of the antiwar movement—as both Kauffman and Gans suggest. On the contrary: these people were the central leaders of the movement; their ideas were the leading ideas of the organizing cadre, and were influential to some extent everywhere. And those ideas, heavily criticized by the disillusioned authors of *Political Passages*, were every bit as sycophantic toward the Communists as the scenes in *The Hanoi Hilton* showed. (In fact, if anything the movie was more restrained than the reality. It did not depict the Jane Fonda figure doing some of the things Fonda really did do: like sitting at an enemy anti-aircraft gun and pretending to take aim at American planes, saying "I wish I had one of those murderers in my sights," or ratting to the North Vietnamese when American POW's complained to her about being mistreated.) As for the alleged sympathy the broad movement displayed toward ordinary American soldiers—everyone remembers that returning veterans shed their uniforms as quickly as possible, for fear of being accosted by protesters and identified as "baby killers" and "rapists."

"A handful"; "a few." The story of the antiwar leadership, of course, is not the whole story of the antiwar movement. But it is an important—indeed crucial—part of the story. Those "few" formed the energetic organizing core of the movement, offered the movement its dominant ideology, and manipulated the popular emotions of hundreds of thousands so that the goals of the leaders might be fulfilled. What were those goals? The "unification" of Vietnam (under Communist rule), the defeat of the United States, the destruction of American power in Southeast Asia. It is highly misleading for Kauffman and Gans to focus solely on the myriad dupes of the antiwar leadership—those whose motives were (often) more honorable and less knowingly political—and not on the ideology and behavior of the leadership itself, as if those people were irrelevant or nonexistent, as if their purposes were never fulfilled.

But my point is not that the new depiction of a "patriotic" antiwar

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movement—a basically nonradical, nonpolitical "peace" movement—is bad history. The problem is that the movement, or rather its core of ideologues, continues to exist and function: it therefore belongs not to history but, precisely, to current events.

The movement cadre never ceased its activities, not even after the "victory" of 1975. It formed the Coalition for a New Foreign and Military Policy (CNFMP) in the late 70's; it formed the backbone of the nuclear freeze project in the early 80's; it now forms the backbone of opposition to American attempts to block the spread of Communist power in Central America. The ideology of these people remains the same. It was best expressed by Richard Barnet in 1969: "The first imperative is that the world must be made safe for revolution." And the basic method used by these people remains the same. They cloak attempts to diminish American power (a purely political objective) under the name of appeals to general morality (e.g., "Stop the War, Stop the Killing!"; "Arms are for Hugging"; "No War in Central America: Nicaragua Wants Peace"). This is a tactic designed to mobilize thousands of people sincerely concerned about *moral* issues (hence the enormous and frightening success of movement people within the established churches), in order that the *political* agenda of the leadership can be fulfilled. And as long as the educated public (the real target of the movement) has no understanding of how it was manipulated in the 60's, it will have no defense against being manipulated again in the 80's. Thus bad history—bad historical understanding—can lead to disastrous present politics.

In fact, what is most disturbing is that some of these people, apparently unencumbered by their past, have in the 80's achieved positions of increasing importance and influence. Frank Borosage, a leading light of the radical Institute for Policy Studies (founded by Richard Barnet and Cora Weiss), was a chief advisor to Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign in 1988. Gareth Porter, after Noam Chomsky the leading apologist for the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia, is now an important figure on the staff of Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts (and Kerry, in turn, is a pillar of the pro-Sandinista lobby in Congress). Richard Barnet himself appears as a political commentator on the *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour*. And in September 1988 the Democratic presidential nominee spent two full days campaigning in California with Tom Hayden—Tom Hayden, the pilgrim to Hanoi, the founder of SDS, known in the 60's as "the American Lenin," and husband of Jane Fonda. Hayden hasn't changed much: at the time, he had one of his children down in Nicaragua, "serving the Nicaraguan people." Mr. Hayden is currently only a member of the California State Assembly. But great things are expected of him. Revising the history of the antiwar movement will make the achievement of those great things all the easier.

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ACADEMY

Postwar Oxford

by Geoffrey Wagner

It was an interesting time. The Second World War had gone on two years longer than the First, with resultant fatigue in England's industrial north, which gave the Labour government its 1945 landslide. Such is admirably explained in Corelli Barnett's *The Audit of War*, which shows how the appeal of the shadow Attlee government, particularly the full employment, cradle-to-grave promises of the Beveridge Plan, was understandably irresistible to this element, as it was also to the services underclass, war-weary and longing for demobilization. No politician, not even Churchill, could be *against* a guarantee of employment, any more than could a French politician be, two years later, *for* legal prostitution. But I can certainly testify that in late 1948, when I was working as press officer for ICI (Imperial Chemical Industries), and I visited 120 factories throughout the British Isles, ranging in products from plastics to paints to explosives, not forgetting a wonderful salt mine in Cheshire, almost without exception I was told by my hosts that the resident shop stewards were militantly Communist. They were the only men who would sacrifice their spare time for the task of organization and, after all, Russia was an ally.

Those of us who had been "up" at Oxford before the war—and by Oxford I also mean "the other place," Cambridge—got preference in demobilization via the so-called "B" release. I was one of those returning to complete my studies at Christ Church. The war had had its rough times, of course, but it had introduced me to parts of the world I had never seen before (nor want to again), and during it we had been generally on the move. The static horrors of long trench warfare had been spared our generation. Nor had I, except for a period in North Africa, known undue hunger. We returned to an England that, in the first year after the war, had stricter rationing than during it. This rationing was exiguous. In 1947 the English were rationed to 1/2 lb. of meat a week, plus three ounces of bacon, two of butter, one ounce of cooking fat, and three of cheese (mousetrap variety). US spam helped out a lot, though I confess I can't stare it in the face today. This was Crippsian austerity, with *work or want* posters everywhere, Bevin-controlled foreign currency allowing you just £25 a year to take out of the country (strictly supervised by customs officials). Colleges supplied their own ration tickets for Hall. During my subsequent job with ICI, I draped a topcoat over my knees under my desk, it was that cold in unheated London.

Half Cambridge's size, 1946 Oxford consisted of 14 small colleges, most of them numbering only two or three

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hundred undergraduates or undergraduettes (as distaff students were officially known). It was far from elite. There were at that time only three colleges with a majority of public school men in residence; Christ Church, New College, and Trinity. These colleges were preempted by scholarships established for such schools years, centuries, ago, and legally impossible to unlock. Winchester virtually owned New College, and Eton Christ Church. There were thus two basic levels of students, the very young grammar school boys (like Kenneth Tynan, with whom I acted), and the rather surly service officers interrupted in their careers by six years in uniform and impatient with the dilatory, unpunctual, vague, sherry-sipping dons who inhabited a rather exotic world of their own.

Of these, since I was studying ("reading") English, I came to recognize that nearly all had involved themselves in some form of fictional fantasy life on the side, perhaps to compensate for the lack of reality allowed them in the Holocaust. C.S. Lewis (improbably enough, Ken Tynan's lit teacher) had just published *Perelandra* and *The Screwtape Letters*. Charles Williams and A.E. Dyson, the Wordsworth expert, had also written what would today be called science fiction. There was B.E.C. David lecturing on Spenser, and of course there was Tolkien, my language (Anglo-Saxon) tutor. Though apparently known to have cracked a smile at home, Tolkien was just about the most boring man I have ever known, although the subject itself wasn't exactly spellbinding (C.L. Wren was almost equally soporific).

Apart from his lugubrious tutes, Tolkien perfected a technique of virtually whispering in the lecture hall, with the result that by halfway through the term he talked to only about four or five students, *Beowulf* fanatics for the most part, sitting literally at his feet. I must say I indulged in similar self-protection from the Yahoos later in life when teaching at City College in New York; I found that if I scheduled my classes at a subway school like that at 7 or 8 A.M., half the students dropped out after a week or so. My Oxford lit tutor, and later Richard Burton's, was the delightful Nevill Coghill, who had just published his modernized *Canterbury Tales* (to vituperative reviews); he spent much of the time I was with him directing Gielgud in London, but he used to josh me quite equably about Tolkien's diminishing lecture audiences. I was less amused. It wasn't what I was paying for. Lord David Cecil, who flunked Kingsley Amis a B.Litt. despite the intervention of F.W. Bateson, a curmudgeonly cripple of another social order, was more of the same, so light on his feet you scarcely saw him from term to term, yet a delight to read on the printed page. C.S. Lewis, a big, burly, ruddy-cheeked man given to flat jokes about cats, more or less read to us his *Allegory of Love* for his Magdalen lecture stint. Such lectures got you almost nothing for your efforts, but college butteries had some enviable vintages, and still do, so there were compensations.

Still and all, exasperatingly dilettante as I found most of my Oxford teachers after the war, I now realize that such men were, in essence and effect, the last humane professors. Without tradition you have no values and simply turn to public opinion. I lived through some of the worst academic riots of the 60's in New York and realize now what irreparable damage they did to the liberal arts which today, in America, pick their topics off the streets — feminism, homosexuality, race, exotic religions, etc. The curriculum of the natural sciences, meanwhile, has remained unscathed. Two plus two still equals four. In some of the social sciences also less harm was done, notably in those with a dependency on math, physics, chemistry, statistics, and so on. I used to feel that essentially the psychology department was saying: two plus two equals four, *but we hate it*! During the City College riots the natural science professoriat simply went home and read the newspapers. In fact, at one point our School of Engineering was kept forcibly open by a group of black students anxious to graduate.

Of course, the nature of Oxbridge in my years there involved a respect for tradition, for the majority of the colleges were ecclesiastical institutions, my own founded by Cardinal Wolsey. Thanks to emoluments created in the 16th century, Christ Church was heavy in bachelor divines whose duties didn't include much teaching or awareness of the world around them. I remember my father telling me that when I went up I shouldn't miss the opportunity of listening to Canon Jenkins. This diminutive and venerable bedesman was over 90 when I got to Oxford, with two teeth in his head and the habits of a miserly crank; his rooms were indescribably filthy since he wouldn't allow any scout (servant) to enter to clean them. And he was as inaudible as Tolkien.

When Heidegger was made rector of Freiburg University, the Weimar-supported Socratic stance in German academe came to an end and, as Allan Bloom puts it, "[t]he most sinister formula in his Rectoral Address of 1933 was, with only the slightest of alterations, the slogan of the Americans who collaborated with the student movements of the sixties." Looking back, I realize that Attlee's England was far from Nazi Germany in this respect. C.S. Lewis didn't have to teach a course on gay rights, or kowtow to feminism, to keep his job. Edward Boyle, Tony Wedgwood Benn, Mark Bonham Carter, and other politically-oriented ex-servicemen all debated at the postwar Oxford Union without asking for any reform of the curriculum, or abandonment of Western culture. What pressures in this direction on Oxbridge have come, alas, from America and its increasingly "open" academe, its ears alert to the shouting in the streets.

Geoffrey Wagner's most recent book is Red Calypso, *reviewed in this issue.*

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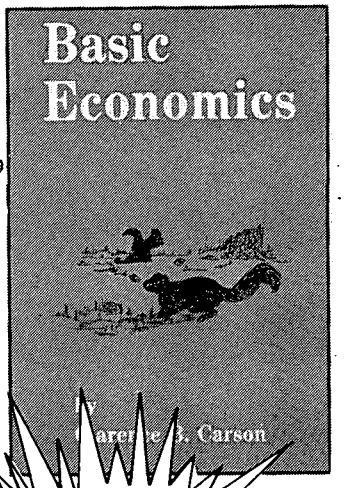

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